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# A Phenomenological Approach to Contemporary Politics

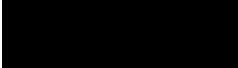
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Contemporary British politics seems to be rife with confusion, conflict, and complexities. All of which is creating a feeling of political apathy. The very way we interact with one another in the sphere of politics is becoming more and more challenged. With the right approach we can begin to understand not only our engagement within politics but also our relationships with others within this complex domain. Despite the many, and varied, approaches to politics, I find there to be something missing. A new perspective is needed, one that can enable us to get to the heart of the problem. This fresh approach will be phenomenological in nature, and will adhere to Heidegger's phenomenology as portrayed in *Being and Time*. In spite of the concern surrounding Heidegger's own participation in politics, I believe that *Being and Time* still contains much that can be employed in this project. By framing intersubjective relationships in terms of authenticity it will become clear just how damaging our interactions with others have become, including within the realm of British politics. I intend to explore Heidegger's concept of Mitsein and then supplement it with an amalgamation of: Lawrence Vogel's and Werner Marx's reconstructions of Mitsein; and Lauren Freeman's account of Heideggerian recognition. All of which will help me establish a refreshing Heideggerian approach to contemporary politics.

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: .......... DATE: 19/09/19 .....

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## Introduction

In today's climate, often just the mere mention of politics can create a sluggish response, a feeling of apathy, and even confusion. In part these negative reactions emerge from a domain that can, at times, become shrouded in a fog of negative connotations. However, fogs do clear eventually given the right atmosphere. Our negative reactions to politics may dissipate, if we are able to approach this field in the right mind-set. My aim then in this project is to do just that.

I will be drawing on contemporary British politics, in order to present some of the issues that I believe are rife within the realm of politics; and also to suggest ways of viewing these issues in order to arrive at solutions. I will provide a different way of framing politics which will be phenomenological in nature. Specifically, it will be Heideggerian; and will primarily draw on Heidegger's philosophy in *Being and Time*.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger offers a unique way of delving into Being, he aims to understand our capacity to make sense of things, people, and the world within which we live. This exploration into Being will be useful when trying to lay the groundwork for an approach to politics. With the help of Werner Marx and Lawrence Vogel a form of authentic Mitsein will be reconstructed from Heidegger's *BT*. An examination of Lauren Freeman's paper will provide us with an accessible Heideggerian account of recognition.<sup>2</sup> All of which will enable us to construct a kind of Heideggerian ethics that has authentic Mitsein at its heart. With that we will be able to demonstrate that *Being and Time* does have the framework to support positive interactions with other people, and therefore can provide the foundations for the way we view people, and also the way we *ought* to be viewing them. My conclusion will be that we are able to gain a useful, and interesting perspective, when we approach politics in a phenomenological way.

## A Phenomenological Approach

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<sup>1</sup> Hereby will be referred to as *BT*

<sup>2</sup> Lauren Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S. 26" in *Philosophy Today* (Spring 2009)

## Methodology

I will present an analytical approach to politics, in order to compare with the phenomenological approach that I will be taking. An analytical approach to politics might be to tease and draw out words and concepts from the overarching concept of 'Politics' such as: representation, power, justice, laws, democracy, parliament. Then, we might try to define what those words mean, analyse the different concepts involved, argue whether or not those words do, or should belong to politics. By doing this we can create a general idea of what politics is: a working definition. This working definition can help us to suggest ways of improving upon politics, for example: good representation seems to be a concept that is lacking within contemporary British politics, the next step would (hopefully) be how can we change that, how can we incorporate good representation into our working definition of politics? In this way, an analytical approach to politics can be useful- it helps us update the working definition. It is after all a *working definition*, it should be altering all the time, changing with the current climate and expectations.

An analytical approach tends to emphasise conceptual analysis, such as the kind that has been described above. Writers such as John Rawls, Isaiah Berlin and G.A. Cohen spring to mind when exploring the realm of analytical political philosophy. It could be argued that they all use analytical techniques in their work, techniques which are often characterized by a thoroughness and meticulousness about a specific topic, teamed with a resistance to inexact or haphazard discussion, in order to create a logical argument in favour of their position.<sup>3</sup> It is a method that can provide us with many interesting results, however it isn't an approach I will be utilising.

In order to demonstrate how the methodology I will be using differs to that of the analytical political approach it might be useful to frame it in comparison with another approach. For the purpose of this comparative analysis I've chosen Rawls and his theory of justice, specifically his veil of ignorance.

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<sup>3</sup> Aaron Preston, *Analytic Philosophy* (<https://www.iep.utm.edu/analytic/>) [accessed 10.12.18] (para. 2 of 104)



Rawls develops a conception of justice that could be described as very Kantian in nature.<sup>4</sup> In this theory, justice is depicted as fairness, which in turn is a universal moral ideal. Rawls attempts to uncover the fundamental moral principles that ought to standardise judgements and reasoning about justice.<sup>5</sup> He makes use of a hypothetical social agreement to argue for certain principles of justice. He suggests three principles: the principle of equal basic liberties, the principle of equal opportunities, and the difference principle.<sup>6</sup> Equal basic liberties is essentially an egalitarian stance: each person has an equal right to liberties, with similar liberties for all.<sup>7</sup> The difference principle states that economic and social inequalities should be organised so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged amongst us, and attached to positions and offices which are open to all, thus everyone has an equal opportunity to them.<sup>8</sup> The veil of ignorance means that the people involved are deprived of all knowledge about their gender or wealth, as well as any other information that might advantage or disadvantage them in their discussion.<sup>9</sup> The group of peoples are essentially alone behind a veil of ignorance, in the original position. The idea is that there wouldn't need to be a discussion as all behind the veil would come to the same decision, individually.<sup>10</sup> The decision about the principles of justice is ahistorical, and will therefore be impartial with respect to peoples' natural characteristics and skills, social status and their own concept of the 'good'. In this sense, the veil of ignorance is a 'thick' veil, as peoples' prior knowledge is very limited.

The original position does quite a good job of mirroring the abstract individuality and the instrumental rationality that seems to be characteristic of modern public existence.<sup>11</sup> Rawls is trying to arrive at a concept of justice by means of the contemplation of individuals considered in abstraction from their relationship with each other; a first person – singular

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<sup>4</sup> Samuel Freeman, "Introduction John Rawls – An Overview" in *The Cambridge Companion to Rawls* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2003) p.1.

<sup>5</sup> S. Freeman, p.2.

<sup>6</sup> Poole, p.74-75

<sup>7</sup> Poole, p.75.

<sup>8</sup> S. Freeman, p.4.

<sup>9</sup> S. Freeman, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> Poole, p.76

<sup>11</sup> Poole, p.78.

account.<sup>12</sup> It thus simulates a kind of isolation as a pre-condition, and also the effect of the institution of public life.<sup>13</sup>

I wish to align myself with Poole by suggesting that although Rawls would like to state that he is dealing with the first person, he is actually dealing with the third person.<sup>14</sup> This is because the individuals are deprived from so much knowledge that they almost become a third person looking in on the situation. The decision that they reach is thus obtained from a third person perspective.

Either way you look at it: whether it is first person – singular or third person, the account is missing something: other people's perspective, or a first-person perspective.

This type of individualisation and isolation involved in Rawls' methodology is something I wish to steer clear of. It has its part to play in his theory, however intersubjectivity as a positive is something I'm wanting to draw out in my project. The individual has an important part to play in a political theory, and the individual within the project of politics is going to be an essential focus for me. However, this focus will rely on the individual being able to recognise that she is situated in a world that is a certain way, and that this world has within it other people, who might have different thoughts, plans, goals to her, as an individual. In this way I'm interested in a first person plural perspective. This perspective is going to be crucial for me, therefore an ahistorical methodology could be detrimental.

At a foundational level the ontological assumptions are at odds with the ones I will be drawing on. Thus, the approach, and the methodology that I think will be beneficial to my project will not be Rawlsian in nature. My suggestion is a phenomenological approach. Such an approach can be defined as one that concentrates on phenomena experienced from a first person point of view. A phenomenological approach to contemporary politics, would be one that focusses on how we personally experience politics, how we approach politics. It would truly put the people back into the political equation. Instead of trying to view politics from a third person, bird's eye, perhaps even a hypothetical point of view that

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<sup>12</sup> Poole, p.78.

<sup>13</sup> Poole, p.78.

<sup>13</sup> Poole, p.78.

<sup>14</sup> Poole, p.78.

is purely concentrating on the conceptual or analytical, we will be viewing it from a first person perspective. Given that the current political climate, everywhere, is (to put it lightly) tense, it is worth approaching the issue from every way possible- after all, it can't hurt!

There are aspects of intersubjectivity that are breaking down within the sphere of politics. Whatever the reason, and I will go into more detail later, something has to give. This is part of the reason I feel that a phenomenological approach could be insightful. If intersubjectivity is breaking down, is it not beneficial to utilise an approach that dives in directly through first person experience? This way, we can tackle the issue head on, from a different, first-person perspective. Given that part of the issue is a disconnectedness within the system, for example, people becoming less engaged in politics; a general feeling of despondence with the way politics is 'playing out', perhaps it is with a phenomenological approach that people will become re-engaged. A phenomenological method can be quite motivating. This is partly because its project is so first-person centred, it almost demands a reaction from the reader, one which primarily involves a questioning of the self, for example: am I authentic, do I act in this or that way? The approach seems to, almost intrinsically, elicit a response. It was in fact Merleau-Ponty who suggested that we can only really understand phenomenology by doing it.<sup>15</sup> This is ideal for my project, as a response, a reaction, a deep engagement with politics is what is wanting. So, by analysing contemporary British politics in a phenomenological way I hope to present an alternative approach, one that can help re-frame politics in a more favourable light.

A phenomenological method can also help strip our experiences down to the bare bones. It can help us to break down our day-to-day experiences and make us question them or see them in a new light. Phenomenology can help us to reduce intersubjectivity to its foundations, by questioning it: for example, what is it really to interact with someone, what is it to be in a world with others. This method will expose us to these foundations in order to recognise what intersubjectivity is. Phenomenology can assist us in regaining sight of foundational aspects of our everyday living: a valuable perspective when analysing what is breaking down in politics, and how we can alter that. A phenomenological approach to

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<sup>15</sup>David E. Cooper, *Existentialism*, second edition (Blackwell Publishing, 1999) p.2

politics can help us to become more thoughtful about politics, perhaps even more informed, in order for us to act responsibly when engaged in politics.

The phenomenological approach I will be taking will be Heideggerian. The Heideggerian concepts I will be drawing upon have primarily taken shape in *BT*.<sup>16</sup> The focus will therefore be on his earlier writings, as opposed to his later writings; those prior to ‘the turn’ of the 1930s. I have chosen this because there were certain concepts contained within *BT* that I found would be useful when applied to politics. These are concepts such as: authenticity, *Mitsein*, and *das Man*. I will start my project by exploring Heidegger’s *BT*.

I will be using a Heideggerian framework in order to show some of the more fundamental issues we are facing within contemporary politics. My method will be both descriptive and evaluative. I will describe the issues in Heideggerian terms, then I will present ‘solutions’ again in Heideggerian terms in the hope that this method sheds a new light on contemporary politics, one which will not only be quite unique but also refreshing and beneficial. I will begin by going into a little bit of detail about Heidegger’s involvement in politics.

### Heidegger’s Involvement in the Nazi Party

Heidegger joined the Nazi Party in 1933.<sup>17</sup> Although he was not a prominent member of the party he imagined and expected to play a major part. Moreover, he never officially apologised for the role he played. The most he has said is that his participation was the biggest stupidity of his life. Which begs the question, what for Heidegger made it the ‘biggest stupidity’? We hope that it is an obvious answer, but sadly there are details which make people doubt Heidegger’s potentially apologetic reasoning.

There are many papers, books, articles on Heidegger’s involvement with the Nazi Party; you can rarely put Heidegger and politics in the same sentence without Nazi Party coming up – and rightly so. The concern that arises from his involvement is whether or not his philosophy is connected to his politics, and whether, because of this, his philosophy is contaminated. I wish to align with people such as Peter Trawny who believe that instead of

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<sup>16</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Trans. By John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1962).

<sup>17</sup> Note that this was six years after he wrote *BT*

condemning his philosophy, we should be condemning the man, Martin Heidegger.<sup>18</sup> Just as you wouldn't suggest that because a person has a skin disease, that they should be cast to the wayside, so we shouldn't disregard Heidegger's philosophy as being contaminated because of his involvement in the Nazi party.

Since the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, and his correspondence with his brother Fritz, there can be no doubt of Heidegger's views on the National Socialist Party, and also the degree of his anti-Semitism. As someone who has been reading and re-reading *BT* for the last couple of years, his views on these topics are very disconcerting. Not only did he write anti-Semitically, but he tried to justify his views by giving them a philosophical grounding: "Jews are uprooted from Being-in-the World"—that is, incapable of authentically caring and understanding.<sup>19</sup> The publications would suggest that he was passionate about the National Socialist Party, partly because he felt that finally his ideas and his philosophies could come to fruition, via the party. Primarily, this is the concern: that his alignment with the National Socialist Party actually makes sense, given his philosophy as described in *BT*.

Although you can draw a politics from *BT* there actually isn't an explicit politics. Any work below to create an ethics from *BT*, can at best be called a Heideggerian reconstruction. This sort of reconstruction is possible simply because he didn't spell out a politics, or indeed an ethics. Perhaps all we can say about the political element of *BT* is that it is wanting. Therefore a politics, whether it is a negative one that could help justify a political party such as the Nazi Party, or a positive one which promotes freedom, are both possible. Perhaps then, the most damning aspect of *BT* is that it can permit Nazi tendencies; that it doesn't directly fight against such a movement.

It could be argued that by presenting an alternative approach to politics than Heidegger's own nationalistic political agenda, that nonetheless is still based on his philosophies in *BT*, I can help reinforce the idea that it is not a contaminated philosophy.

Heidegger's involvement in the National Socialist Party is a deeply debated topic. Unfortunately, to get truly caught up in such a debate is outside the scope of my project. I think it sufficient to recognise that Heidegger's Nazism is indeed troubling, and the fact that

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<sup>18</sup> Joshua Rothman, "Is Heidegger Contaminated by Nazism", in *The New Yorker*, April 2014 (<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/is-heidegger-contaminated-by-nazism>) [accessed 10.01.19] (para. 14 of 15).

<sup>19</sup> Rothman, (<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/is-heidegger-contaminated-by-nazism>) [accessed 10.01.19] (para. 5 of 15).

I'm trying to suggest that Heideggerian concepts could be useful when approaching contemporary British politics, could be problematic given his involvement. However, if you take the line that his philosophy in *BT* isn't dirtied by such an involvement in Nazism, then what I'm suggesting might be reasonable.

### Heidegger's *Being and Time*

One of the themes running throughout Heidegger's *BT* is authenticity; what it means to be authentic, and inauthentic. The central idea surrounding authenticity is a well-rounded understanding of our own Being; inauthenticity is the inverse – a sort of confusion with regards to our own Being. I wish to draw on Heidegger's concept of authenticity in order to demonstrate that it could be a useful term when viewing the ins and outs of contemporary British politics. To take a subject such as politics, a subject that is discussed at length, is rife with opinions, can be very complex, and then to establish a phenomenological way of approaching it, would be invaluable. This is what I hope to achieve, with the jumping off point being the Heideggerian sense of authenticity. But first, in order to understand authenticity fully, and achieve what I hope to achieve we must get stuck into Heidegger's *BT*.

### Dasein

In *BT*, Heidegger suggests that the question of the meaning of Being has thus far been misinterpreted, and is by no means obvious.<sup>20</sup> He suggests that we need to "raise anew the question of the meaning of Being."<sup>21</sup> Fundamentally, this is his aim in *BT*, to scale down the question of the meaning of Being to something that can become known, at an ontological and phenomenological level.

Heidegger proposes that to grasp being we must tackle it via a particular kind of entity: Dasein.<sup>22</sup> Dasein is a way of approaching the question of Being because, according to Heidegger, it is the entity that understands Being: "Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being."<sup>23</sup> However, this 'understanding' isn't perfect, it isn't (at

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<sup>20</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.1 sz.1

<sup>21</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.1 sz.1

<sup>22</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.68 sz.42.

<sup>23</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.32 sz.12.

least at this primary stage) a full-bodied understanding of Being. Dasein, in its typical interactions with other entities functions with a pre-ontological understanding of Being. It is as if she has a concealed view of the a priori conditions that make certain modes of Being possible.<sup>24</sup> Strangely enough, it is in this way that we are ontically closest, yet ontologically furthest away from Dasein.<sup>25</sup> Heidegger thinks it is imperative that we approach the question of Being this way because it is important for him that we do not proceed from a view from nowhere. We must begin from our own human vantage point. Heidegger suggests that the existential analytic of Dasein will be the first port of call when delving into the concealed, and shared, underlying meaning of Dasein.

So then, what exactly is Dasein? Dasein literally translates as Da 'there' and Sein 'being', thus 'there-being'; it is a way of stating that we are Beings practically engaged in the world. We are always situated within the world; we are active participants in reality; we are able to lead our lives. It is crucial not to think of Dasein in thing-like terms, it should be understood as being very distinct from other entities, such as a desk. Although a desk could be argued to reflect some sense of there-being within the world, it reflects this in a radically different way to Dasein. One of the fundamental differences between Dasein and a thing – say a desk- is that Dasein can take a questioning relation to one's own being, whereas the desk cannot.

To take a questioning stance to one's own Being means to be aware of one's ability and responsibility to make choices, this is founded in Heidegger's statement that every Dasein has an a priori sense of "mineness" or being oneself, this is referred to as Jemeinigkeit.<sup>26</sup> Every Dasein faces various ways of existing within the world, there are many possible futures a Dasein could have. To exist is to realize and actualize one of the possible futures relevant to you. To live one's life is to be faced repeatedly with the question of how to be.<sup>27</sup> Compare Dasein (with its being to be) with a cat (a non-human animal). The kind of creature it is determines the kinds of things it does, for example, a cat can meow, purr, scratch, jump, allegedly has nine lives etc., in this case essence determines existence. On the other hand, for Dasein, existence determines essence.<sup>28</sup> This is a claim which shifts the long-established

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<sup>24</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.78 sz.53.

<sup>25</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.37 sz.16.

<sup>26</sup> Heidegger states: "...because Dasein is in each case essentially its own possibility, it can, in its very being, 'choose' itself and win itself; it can also lose itself and never win itself, or only 'seem' to do so." Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.68 sz.42.

<sup>27</sup> As Heidegger declares, "[Dasein] has its Being to be" Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.33 sz.12.

<sup>28</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.67 sz.42.

philosophical view that the nature of a thing is a more elemental than the mere fact of its being. As Heidegger puts it, "Dasein accordingly takes priority over all other entities in several ways. The first priority is an ontical one: Dasein is an entity whose Being has the determinate character of existence. The second priority is an ontological one: Dasein is in itself 'ontological' because existence is thus determinative for it."<sup>29</sup>

Heidegger is aware that to obtain knowledge of Being, through Dasein, could potentially be problematic. Dasein is chosen in order to understand Being from an involved perspective in order to distance ourselves from a God's eye view, however at first glance, it seems like we've arrived at a vantage point that is too involved with Being, and thus is tainted with prejudices. In order to grapple with Being then, we need Dasein to have some form of constancy, we must try to analyse Dasein from a vantage point that is least likely to be prejudiced. Since Dasein can be understood only in relation to the world of which it is a part, it isn't possible to clarify Dasein in abstraction from the world, after all, its being is Being-in-the-world. Heidegger states, "We must rather choose such a way of access and such a kind of interpretation that this entity can show itself in itself and from itself."<sup>30</sup> Heidegger claims that this access point is average everydayness; "In this everydayness there are certain structures which we shall exhibit – not just any accidental structures, but essential ones which, in every kind of Being that factical Dasein may possess, persist as determinative for the character of its Being."<sup>31</sup> Therefore, through an exploration of Dasein's average everydayness we can come to learn and understand the general structure of Dasein's being, and thus the general structure of being.

Dasein's average everydayness can be defined as "Being-in-the-world which is falling and disclosed, thrown and projecting, and for which its ownmost potentiality-for-Being is an issue, both in its Being alongside the 'world' and in its Being-with-Others".<sup>32</sup> Heidegger's account of average everydayness can thus be taken as an account of Dasein's Being-in-the-world. Heidegger intends this term to be philosophically loaded: the hyphens serve to suggest that world and Being cannot be separated, and should not be conceived of as two

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<sup>29</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.34 sz.13.

<sup>30</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.37 sz.16.

<sup>31</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.38 sz.17.

<sup>32</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 225 sz.181.



independent entities, but instead, they arise through and with one another. An exploration into Being-in-the-world, and the terms associated with it will be instrumental in uncovering the hidden depths of Dasein, and being. In the following sections I aim to explain: Heidegger's presented modes of encounter, Being-with, temporality, and then ending with Heidegger's concept of authenticity and totality.

### Modes of encounter

Practical involvement with things is taken to be the most basic characterization of Dasein in average everydayness. Heidegger refers to a hammer as an example of practical engagement, however he also refers to the sun as a tool (something that helps us to realise our purpose), therefore this practical engagement with things is to be taken in the broadest sense.<sup>33</sup>

Heidegger uses the word equipment to pertain to the entities that we practically engage with: "We shall call those entities which we encounter in concern "equipment"."<sup>34</sup> In our average everydayness we encounter equipment all the time, whether it is for working, cooking, writing, researching etc.<sup>35</sup> Heidegger defines equipment as "...essentially something in-order-to."<sup>36</sup> In this way, objects that we can engage with are viewed as serving some kind of equipmental purpose to us, an object that we can use to some form of end.

Entities that are encountered as equipment have their own special sort of being: "The kind of Being which equipment possesses – in which it manifests itself in its own right – we call "readiness-to-hand"."<sup>37</sup> One can only understand an entity's' readiness-to-hand by practically engaging with it, it cannot be uncovered theoretically, or just by looking at its appearance.<sup>38</sup> Heidegger's primary aim here is to demonstrate that the world is first and foremost revealed and accessed when interpreted from this engaged perspective. The original basis of world disclosure is through significance, not pure representation. Having said that, if one later acquires quite an abstract interest, for example, what state glass is in

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<sup>33</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.98 sz.69.

<sup>34</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.97 sz.68.

<sup>35</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.97 sz.68.

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.97 sz.68.

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.98 sz.69.

<sup>38</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.98 sz.69.

before it becomes a solid, then adopting a maximally dis-engaged present-at-hand perspective is best. The claim is that this could never exist in absolute purity.

While engaged in seamless activity, Dasein has no conscious experience of the equipment's readiness-to-hand, it is inconspicuous. It would take one to stand back and reflect on the equipment in order to recognize the readiness-to-hand of the entity.<sup>39</sup> For example, while walking past a chair or even while sitting down on said chair, I'm not thinking extensively of how the chair that I am sitting on has its readiness-to-hand as being a seat for people to use so they don't need to stand. I would have to consciously think about the chair and the purpose it serves to notice its readiness-to-hand.

When the equipment breaks down, or can't be used in the intended way, it becomes known to us as being un-readiness-to-hand: "When we concern ourselves with something, the entities which are most closely ready-to-hand may be met as something unusable, not properly adapted for the use we have decided upon. The tool turns out to be damaged, or the material unsuitable. In each of these cases equipment is here, ready-to-hand."<sup>40</sup> An example would be, I do not reflect on my skateboard when I ride it, and if I did happen to reflect on it I would be quite likely to fall off. In contrast, when something fails to serve its purpose, it comes to my attention, for example when my skateboard becomes damaged. The readiness-to-hand of the skateboard becomes known through its current, broken, un-readiness-to-hand state. Usually, I become so absorbed in my activity, the activity of riding my skateboard, that I do not think of myself as a subject over and against a world of objects. It is not that there is no awareness from me at all but that the awareness that is present (Heidegger refers to as circumspection) isn't subject-object in form.<sup>41</sup>

In fact, Heidegger denies that our most fundamental way of encountering entities is characterized by subject-object relations. He suggests that when a mode of encounter is best described in subject-object format it is a derivative kind of encounter, it involves a move from readiness-to-hand to present-at-hand. One can think of present-at-hand entities as things- independent objects that do not directly have a readiness-to-hand. Entities which are structured as present-at-hand are entities which bear certain context-general or measurable properties such as weight, height, colour etc.

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<sup>39</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.99 sz.69.

<sup>40</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.102 sz.73.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.98 sz.69.

Heidegger asserts that presence-at-hand is not a primary way of being for things, some form of disorder is required to bring it about. This disorder can occur in three forms: conspicuousness, obtrusiveness and obstinacy.<sup>42</sup> The first form has already been mentioned- when a breakdown occurs, the equipment becomes unfit for its purpose and conspicuous.<sup>43</sup> The second form is when I have something in front of me which isn't useful for my current purpose, some other thing would serve my purpose better, thus the useless thing becomes obtrusive.<sup>44</sup> The latter form is when I have something in front of me but it actually gets in the way of my aim; it is an obstacle and thus is experienced as obstinate, and I need to get rid of it if I am to make progress in my current task.<sup>45</sup> Heidegger states: "The modes of conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, and obstinacy all have the function of bringing to the fore the characteristic of presence-at-hand to what is ready-to-hand."<sup>46</sup>

The difference then between ready-to-hand and present-to-hand is that the ready-to-hand is specified in terms of the purposes of Dasein, whereas the present-at-hand has properties, the specification of which requires no reference to the purposes of Dasein. The present-at-hand gives rise to the theoretical description of entities and the theorising posture of Dasein, which as we have previously mentioned is not how Heidegger believes Being and the world is best accessed and understood. The crucial point to make clear here is that Dasein is the foundation of the readiness-to-hand, and as Heidegger has claimed, it is the readiness-to-hand that first and foremost explains entities. This point really emphasises Heidegger's project: that without accessing the question of the meaning of being from Dasein's vantage point we will be missing out the fundamentals of Being, as Dasein best reveals being.

#### Being-with

Heidegger wishes to distance himself from the Cartesian 'I'-entity as to do so would be to conceive of Dasein as present-at-hand. In searching for a point of entry for an alternate answer Heidegger notices that equipment is often revealed to us as being for the

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<sup>42</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.104 sz.74.

<sup>43</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.102 sz.73.

<sup>44</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.103 sz.73.

<sup>45</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.103 sz.73.

<sup>46</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.104 sz.74.

sake of the projects and lives of other Daseins: "When, for example we walk along the edge of a field but 'outside it', the field shows itself as belonging to such-and-such a person, and decently kept by him; the book we have used was bought at So-and-so's shop and given by such-and-such a person, and so forth."<sup>47</sup> It is in this way that we can encounter others (other Dasein) like ourselves - through equipment.<sup>48</sup> Encounters with others presupposes a being that can encounter others, thus, Being-with-others presupposes the possibility of Being-with; Being-with is the condition for the possibility of ontically being-with-others (a sofa doesn't have this possibility or this structure).<sup>49</sup>

Being-with is a primordial constitutive structure with several aspects. As an existential structure, Being-in-the-world involves Being-with-others. On the ontological level, just as Dasein is never without a world, so too is it never without others: "By reason of this with-like Being-in-the-world, the world is always the One that I share with Others. The world of Dasein is a with-world [Mitwelt]. Being-in is Being-with-Others. Their Being-in-themselves within-the-world is Dasein-with [Mit-dasein]."<sup>50</sup> One aspect of being-with (Mitsein) refers to the structure or relation between Daseins that allows them to encounter one another. For example, the way we experience others through equipment, as explained above. The second structure is Dasein-with (MitDasein), this denotes the shared condition of Daseins- their being-with-one-another, an example of this would be direct encounters we have with others, such as cooking with another person, being actively engaged with another. The third structure is the description of the world as a locus for Dasein with: it is a with-world.

As Dasein we need to be inducted into a web of shared significances in order for Dasein to operate within, and to experience the world. Mitsein enables this induction; and this is the condition for world disclosure. If Mitsein is the condition for world disclosure and Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world, encountering entities, engaging in equipment etc. then "Dasein in itself is essentially Being-with."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.153-154 sz.118.

<sup>48</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.154 sz.118.

<sup>49</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.161 sz.124.

<sup>50</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.155 sz.118.

<sup>51</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 156 sz. 120.

There is, then, no exit from Being-with, even when we are alone we are still with others.<sup>52</sup> Although this sounds suffocating, this Mitsein structure does play a positive role in creating the background of shared intelligibility, that in fact lets us be fully human in the first place. As will become clear, Heidegger is also aware that there is something deeply problematic, and very unsettling about this mode of existence that Mitsein brings with it, he refers to this troubling Being-with as das Man.

## Das Man

For Heidegger, the Being of everydayness lies in Das Man; the 'they'. This everyday way of Being is something that at times seems to be misguided and dire, and yet is an existentiale. Heidegger professes this general way of Being to be an unsatisfactory condition to be in.<sup>53</sup> This condition involves fleeing and avoiding something about ourselves, as Dasein. Ultimately, his main complaints about the 'they'; about falling into Das Man, is that it is dysfunctional, it lacks truth; and crucially, he states that Das Man is inauthentic.<sup>54</sup>

There seems to be two aspects to Das Man. The first aspect, is that it is an existentiale, and the second, is that it is also something that is to be avoided. Although this may seem to be quite contradictory, the nature of Das Man doesn't have to be so. It would appear that das Man is structural and inescapable as tendencies, but that these tendencies have degrees attached to them. There is a natural propensity for Dasein to fall into involvement in das Man, and without it Dasein would struggle. For example, just to be able to use language relies on das Man. Moreover, as children we imitate, learn behaviours and skills through an involvement in das Man. It is important to understand that das Man isn't a measurable entity, rather, it is an unclear part of social reality. Without such a social reality, language would be almost non-existent. Furthermore, without language we wouldn't be able to articulate the world.<sup>55</sup> Thus das Man is a necessary part of our Being-in-the-world.<sup>56</sup> And in fact, Heidegger doesn't seem to raise a complaint against this specific structural aspect of das Man. He seems to stress the importance of das Man when he states: "Das

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<sup>52</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.156 sz. 120.

<sup>53</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.167 sz. 129.

<sup>54</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.167 sz. 129.

<sup>55</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.212 sz.167.

<sup>56</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.167 sz.129.

Man is an existential; and belongs as an ordinary phenomenon to Dasein's positive constitution"<sup>57</sup>.

It would seem that das Man becomes harmful when Dasein gets 'lost' in das Man, and this happens when she attempts to withdraw from aspects of her Being that are difficult or painful for her to face. It is in this way that involvement in das Man can lead to Dasein becoming self-estranged. The "mineness" that is intrinsic to Dasein becomes lost and can remain hidden in her everyday Being in das Man. This involvement with das Man is a way of taking Being easy, a way of recoiling from (at first glance) troubling aspects of Being, and this seems to be understandable, but also negative for Heidegger.

There is another reason why das Man can be harmful: it lacks truth. The lack of truth involved in das Man revolves around language. Das Man is an essential part of our world, and our knowledge of language, however it can present a distortion of both of these.<sup>58</sup> Language is something that is constantly reworked- we only have to think of various additions to the dictionary that were never used hundreds of years ago to understand this crucial aspect of language. As each person acquires language she acquires the average understanding of it.<sup>59</sup> It is an average understanding because it relies on no direct comprehension with the matters that the language is about. What we acquire is an indirect capacity to talk about doing things with things.<sup>60</sup> In this way, Heidegger states, "What is said-in-the-talk gets understood; but what the talk is about is understood only approximately and superficially."<sup>61</sup> In average everydayness, then, Dasein has this indirect know-how by just knowing how to talk about it. Even when Dasein does have an understanding of something which is grounded in direct actions and abilities, she often will lapse back into an average understanding of it, so that if she wants a genuine understanding she must try over and over again to win it back - and this is something das Man does not lend itself to.

Another element that can be linked with self-estrangement is a sort of fascination with das Man. Dasein becomes someone who is trying to impress others, trying to share too thoroughly with others: "We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as they [das Man] take

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<sup>57</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.167 sz.129.

<sup>58</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.165 sz.127.

<sup>59</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.212 sz.167.

<sup>60</sup> John Richardson, *Heidegger*, (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London, New York: 2012) p.135.

<sup>61</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 212 sz.168.

pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as they see and judge; likewise, we shrink back from the 'great mass' as they shrink back; we find 'shocking' what they find shocking."<sup>62</sup> In doing so, being-with-others can decrease our competence over things. At a very fundamental level, language can help Dasein know itself better, as long as her aim isn't first and foremost at sharing in them with others, then if the latter is the case, there is no place for self-understanding.<sup>63</sup> This concept of 'chat' or idle talk is all tied up with curiosity, ambiguity and fascination, concepts that will be explained in more detail later.

Das Man, although it has its essential components, is, for Heidegger, a form of inauthentic Mitsein: "'Inauthenticity'" does not mean anything like Being-no-longer-in-the-world, but amounts rather to a quite distinctive kind of Being-in-the-world – the kind of Being which is completely fascinated by the 'world' and by the Dasein-with of Others in the "they".<sup>64</sup> More detail on authenticity and inauthenticity will follow shortly.

## Temporality

For Heidegger, a central theme in the question of the meaning of being is time. He claims that it is time which provides the most primordial horizon for the understanding of Being. In this sense time is to be understood in terms of temporality, to which Dasein has a very close relationship; "Time must be brought to light – and genuinely conceived – as the horizon for all understanding of Being and for anyway of interpreting it."<sup>65</sup> Heidegger wishes to distance himself from the claim that time is some kind of thing, or container of things, or flow, which is the concept of time found in the natural sciences. He intends to work with a more practical conception of time. Thus, for Heidegger, time is time for Dasein to do something; to have projects; it is the movement through a world as a space of possibilities.

For Heidegger, Dasein is essentially temporal. Its temporal character is derived from the three-fold ontological structure: projection, thrownness, and fallenness.

Projection, also defined as ahead-of and 'existence', refers to Dasein's potentiality-for-being, its potential to carry out future projects, it is in this way Dasein projects its being

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<sup>62</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.164 sz.127.

<sup>63</sup> Richardson, p.136.

<sup>64</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.220 sz.176.

<sup>65</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.39 sz.17.

upon various possibilities. Heidegger defines projection as “possible way for it [Dasein] to be.”<sup>66</sup> Projection thus represents the phenomenon of the future.

As thrownness, also defined as already-in, Dasein always finds itself already situated in a historically conditioned environment- the world. In the world Dasein is, to a certain extent, limited within the space of possibilities that are in this pre-defined world it finds itself in.<sup>67</sup> Thrownness is the name for the characteristics of Dasein that are conditioned by its being situated within a world of pre-existent values and standards. It is in this way that thrownness represents the phenomenon of the past as having-been.

Finally, fallenness: “...there is revealed a basic kind of Being which belongs to everydayness; we call this the “falling” of Dasein.”<sup>68</sup> As fallenness, Dasein exists in the midst of beings which are both Dasein and not Dasein. The encounter with those beings, for example the modes of encounter that are ‘being-alongside’ or ‘being-with’, is made possible for Dasein by the presence of those beings within-the-world. Fallenness thus represents the primordial phenomenon of the present.

Dasein, and Being-in-the-world can be understood in terms of a dynamic relation between thrownness, projection, and fallenness. The structural whole is referred to as care. There are three more related terms that Heidegger includes in ‘care’. These are: state-of-mind, understanding, and fascination. The dimensionality of care can thus be interpreted in terms of three temporal dimensions: past (thrownness/ state-of-mind), present (fallenness/ fascination) and future (projection/ understanding).

Understanding might be best described as a kind of competence rather than as a matter of knowledge- it is a matter of knowing-how rather than knowing-that. An example of the sort of understanding Heidegger is primarily interested in is ‘Jane knows football’: Jane knows how to play football and knows how to play it well- thus she understands football. In Heidegger’s use of the term, “In understanding, as an existentials, that which we have such competence over is not a “what”, but Being as existing. The kind of Being which Dasein has, as potentiality-for-Being, lies existentially in understanding.”<sup>69</sup> Understanding captures the

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<sup>66</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.67 sz.42.

<sup>67</sup> As Heidegger puts it, “The characteristic of Dasein’s Being –this ‘that it is’ – is veiled in its ‘whence’ and ‘whither’, yet disclosed in itself all the more unveiledly, we call it the ‘thrownness’ of this entity into its ‘there’: indeed, it is thrown in such a way that Being-in-the-world, it is the “there”.” Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.174 sz.135.

<sup>68</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.219 sz.175.

<sup>69</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.183 sz.143.



sense in which Dasein is future-directed and aware of the possibilities open to him within the world. Dasein is ahead of himself in the world, and there is instilled within him a sense of what he wants to do, what he wants to accomplish. If this wasn't the case than Dasein's reactions to things would be mere mechanical, there wouldn't be any deliberation, nor concern for his actions.

For Heidegger, self-understanding isn't just how well you know yourself, it is a lot deeper than that. Who you are is not a matter of who you say or think you are, but rather of how you live; which projects you choose to take up; essentially what you practically do with your time.<sup>70</sup> Self-understanding relies on being to be an issue for you. After all, to be Dasein is for who you are and what it is to be human to be in question, and for those questions to matter to you. For example, being a cook, do I cook because I enjoy it, or as a means to an end; these questions are bound up with how my cooking matters to me. Furthermore, these questions, or for-the-sakes-of-which, or self-understandings are never social positions. Heidegger is asking us to think of ourselves as being our abilities-to-be, rather than our social positions, our physical characteristics, or our potential. For example, one can occupy the social position of being a mother, without being existentially engaged in being one, and reverse-wise, a for-the-sake-of-which is not the same thing as a social position. In order to be existentially engaged by way of being we must 'press ahead' into it.<sup>71</sup>

Hopefully it will be clear why existence/projection and understanding (including self-understanding) are interrelated dynamic aspects of Being-in-the-world: they both disclose the aspect of Being-in-the-world that pertains to the future. They both give an account of what it is for Dasein to be future oriented.

State-of-mind or 'Befindlichkeit' can best be described as the state in which one may be found.<sup>72</sup> Heidegger claims that "Existentially, a state-of-mind implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we encounter something that matters to us."<sup>73</sup> State-of-mind thus captures the way we find ourselves already disposed towards things in this way or that.<sup>74</sup> The basic idea is that one is able to affectively register, specifically in a manner that motivates an action in response, when things are going well or badly with respect to them.

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<sup>70</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.188 sz.148.

<sup>71</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.186 sz.146.

<sup>72</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.172 sz.134 footnote.

<sup>73</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.177 sz.158.

<sup>74</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.173 sz.134.

In this way there is a transcendental aspect to *Befindlichkeit*. It is a kind of affective registering that helps me gauge when things are going right or wrong, and in turn helps me choose and possess projects. It shows itself in how Dasein 'finds' the world, as boring, scary, thrilling etc. It might be useful to break down state-of-mind by phrasing it as a question that you might be asked- 'how do you find yourself?'. In order to answer the question you must find yourself, find how you already are, find out how you feel, and then once you have looked into these things, you find yourself amidst the circumstances of your living, then you can answer the initial question. In this way state-of-mind relates to thrownness, because it too describes the temporal aspect of Dasein that is the past.<sup>75</sup> Our state-of-mind refers directly to the historically conditioned context of which Dasein finds itself.<sup>76</sup>

For Heidegger, the concept of fascination seems to be intrinsic to fallenness, and thus intrinsic to the present. In everyday terms 'fascination' would hint towards an interest or passion about something, it doesn't necessarily mean something negative. Perhaps, the most negative way it could be perceived would be that the person who is fascinated with something is too fascinated with the topic, to the point where everything else falls to the wayside. It might be interesting to explore whether or not Heidegger has two ways of conceiving of fascination: a positive and then a negative definition of fascination. First, we shall explore what he means by fascination in the present. He suggests that Dasein becomes fascinated with the world, but in a way in which he is too fascinated, he becomes absorbed in it, and therefore lost.

Heidegger claims that "'Fallenness" into the 'world' means an absorption in Being-with-one-another, in so far as the latter is guided by idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity."<sup>77</sup> Idle talk, roughly pertains to conversing with others, in an unexamined way, about facts and information, while also failing to use language to reveal their relevance.<sup>78</sup> An example might be a discussion about politics that is simply grounded in newspaper headlines, instead of the actual article: two people discuss what they assume is the primary argument of the piece, instead of reading, and critically engaging in the article itself, this in turn creates a discussion

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<sup>75</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.175 sz. 136.

<sup>76</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.174 sz. 135.

<sup>77</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.220 sz.175.

<sup>78</sup>Michael Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), (<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/heidegger/>) [accessed 01.02.18] (para.56 of 155)

which is unexamined, and far from facts and real information. Curiosity is essentially the search for constant stimulation and novelty, instead of belonging and dwelling in the world.<sup>79</sup> An example of curiosity might be a person who loves to travel, but in fact what he really loves is being able to tell people where in the world he has visited, instead of enjoying the different cultures, traditions, and sights that he encounters when he is physically in these different places; he isn't grounded and dwelling in the world, despite claiming that he is. Finally, ambiguity relates to a loss of any sensitivity to the distinction between genuine understanding and frivolous chitchat.<sup>80</sup> One can just think of any conversation involving small talk or needless gossiping, both of which can certainly be classed as frivolous chitchat. All three aspects of fallenness involve a sort of closing off or sheltering of Dasein from the world through a fascination with the world. Heidegger describes this fascination and fallenness as inauthentic: "Dasein has, in the first instance, fallen away from itself as an authentic potentiality for Being its Self, and has fallen into the 'world'."<sup>81</sup> If the average everydayness of Dasein involves a fascination with the world in fallenness, and this necessarily involves Being-with, then it is safe to assume that the average everydayness of Being-with is one of inauthenticity. It would seem then that thus far we have a rather negative, and yet necessary, definition of fascination. Perhaps later we will find a positive, authentic concept of fascination.

At this point in our existential analytic of Dasein we have reached the end of Division One of *BT*. We have made progress in finding out the basic structures of Dasein/Being. However, further exploration is needed.

### Authenticity and Totality

So far, we have this idea of Heidegger's concept of authenticity and inauthenticity. An idea that revolves around Being-with, understanding, fallenness and a fascination with the world. Essentially, so far, I've presented the version of authenticity that springs forth

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<sup>79</sup> Wheeler, (<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/heidegger/>) [accessed 01.02.18] (para. 59 of 155)

<sup>80</sup> Wheeler, (<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/heidegger/>) [accessed 01.02.18] (para. 59 of 155)

<sup>81</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.220 sz.175.

from Division One of *BT*. However, this is not the full picture. In fact, Heidegger, at the beginning of Division Two tells us that the interpretation of the Being of Dasein which has been offered so far is restrictive in two ways, and that is Dasein's "possibilities of authenticity and totality."<sup>82</sup> Division Two explores these areas. In this section then, I will lay out Heidegger's concept of authenticity and totality.

Thus far, Dasein's existence has been understood in terms of thrownness, projection, and fallenness. The projective aspect of this structure means that at each moment of its life Dasein is being-ahead-of-itself, it is projecting itself onto the realm of possibilities, it is in this way that Dasein is incomplete- it is always ahead-of-itself. Death offers the end possibility, it completes Dasein's existence. Therefore, an understanding of Dasein's relation to death would make a crucial addition to the existential analytic of Dasein.

A stark problem that arises is that the usual phenomenological approach breaks down when it comes to death. This is because we cannot experience our own death until it happens and then we are no longer being. A possible response to this problem could be that we can experience death through others. Phenomenologically we encounter death as an end in one sense, when our loved ones, or simply people we know or have heard of die. Therefore, death isn't an alien concept- we have a slight understanding of it, even if we don't have a full understanding of our own death. However, the problem is that experiencing death through others is just to experience Being-with as dead, which is still a mode of our own continued existence.

Perhaps another possible response to the problem would be to assert that Dasein can relate towards its own death as a possibility that is always before it, the fact that death is inevitable. Death, then, just is "the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all."<sup>83</sup> It is this awareness of death as an inevitable possibility that cannot become actual that prevents the phenomenological analysis from breaking down. The failure of the previous response to the problem highlighted the fact that in each instance death is inextricably linked to some specific individual Dasein, it isn't an experience that can be shared. My death is mine in quite a radical sense; it is my death alone, when all relations to others disappears, it is the moment when I am truly detached from others: I am alone. Heidegger captures this

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<sup>82</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.276 sz.233.

<sup>83</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.307 sz.262.

non-relational notion in the term ownmost.<sup>84</sup> Once I take on-board the possibility of my own not-Being, my own being-able-to-be is brought into view. It makes sense that thinking seriously about my own death, my not-Being, can help inform me about my own Being, for example not only what it could mean to be, but also specifically what it means for me, for my own goals, aspirations, and moreover how I have been spending my time. My awareness of my own death as an omnipresent possibility discloses the authentic self, and my own totality.

Heidegger's account of being-towards-death forms the backbone of a reinterpretation of the phenomenon of care (thrownness, projection, fallenness). Care becomes interpreted in terms of Being-towards-death, meaning that Dasein has an internal relation to nothing. Being-towards-death not only has the three-dimensional structure of care, but can also be realised authentically and inauthentically.

Let's begin with the authentic mode of being-towards-death. Given the analysis of death centralising around the fact of it being a possibility, the authentic form of projection in the case of death is anticipation. As has been described earlier, death is our ownmost possibility, in this way then being-towards-death discloses our ownmost potentiality-for-being; we disclose ourselves to ourselves as the utmost possibility through anticipation. Anticipation views death as revealing Dasein's uttermost possibilities. In anticipation, Dasein finds itself moving towards itself as its own potentiality-for-Being. In this way anticipating death can lead to authenticity.

Death isn't just disclosed authentically in projection, but also in thrownness. The key phenomenon here is the state-of-mind that Heidegger calls anxiety. Heidegger states: "Being-towards-death is essentially anxiety."<sup>85</sup> In the form in which Heidegger is interested, anxiety opens up the world to me in a distinctive way. When I am anxious, I am no longer at home in the world. I fail to find the world intelligible, as I recognise that there is no almighty reason for doing things, or set of rules that I must follow in life.<sup>86</sup> Dasein finds this deeply troubling initially, but can face her anxiety authentically by recognising that although there

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<sup>84</sup> "...death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility – non-relational, certain, and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped." Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.303 sz.259.

<sup>85</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.310 sz. 266.

<sup>86</sup>As Heidegger puts it: "...the state of mind which can hold open the utter and constant threat to itself arising from Dasein's ownmost individualised Being, is anxiety. In this state-of-mind, Dasein finds itself face to face with the 'nothing' of the possible impossibility of its existence." Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.310 sz.266.

is no one telling her what should matter in life, things still matter to her. Which must mean that she is the one that decides what matters to her, and which projects are important to her. There is something freeing in this, and also illuminating. Simply because, through anxiety we can learn about our Being, and the way that we can authentically be in the world- by choosing what matters to me, and taking responsibility for my choices. Anxiety is therefore one of the keys to unlocking authentic Being. Something I will explore later is whether or not anxiety could also be the key to unlocking authentic Mitsein.

Thus far, Heidegger has interpreted two out of the three dimensions of care, in light of Dasein's essential finitude- Being-towards-death. What about the third dimension, fallenness? Given that we are exploring a mode of authentic Dasein, fallenness doesn't come into it. Fallenness cannot be a realization of this structure of authentic care, as it is essentially inauthentic.

A nice summary of Heidegger's authentic mode of Being-towards-death is presented as: "...anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather, in an impassioned freedom towards death- a freedom which has been released from the illusions of the "they", and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious."<sup>87</sup>

So, what does the inauthentic mode of Being-towards-death involve? We can already guess that it has something to do with fallenness, average everydayness and the 'they'. In everyday Being-towards-death, the 'they' obscures our awareness of the meaning of our own deaths by de-individualising death. Heidegger explains, "In Dasein's public way of interpreting, it is said that 'one dies', because everyone else and oneself can talk himself into saying that "in no case is it I myself", for this "one" is the "nobody"."<sup>88</sup> In this way, Dasein not only becomes lost in the public opinion of death, but also, attempts to evade death. This can be interpreted as a further way in which Dasein attempts to cover up Being, and a way that everyday Dasein's fallenness manifests itself. It is not exactly like I am refusing to acknowledge my own inevitable death, but rather that the certainty of my death is achieved by idle talk, which is of the wrong sort, idle talk such as 'everyone dies' is a way

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<sup>87</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.311 sz.266.

<sup>88</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.297 sz.253.

of de-individualizing Dasein's Being-towards-death. Furthermore, it implies inductive reasoning: I've observed that many people have died, it would seem that everyone dies. However, as Heidegger asserts "We cannot compute the certainty of death by ascertaining how many cases of death we encounter."<sup>89</sup> Thus to talk of death in this way is to misunderstand Being-towards-death, and to approach death inauthentically. Furthermore, in the face of death expectation seeks secure and stable relationships with others in the world of the 'they', again leading to a misunderstanding of being-towards-death.

Another way in which the mode of inauthentic Being-towards-death is realised is in a modification of thrownness and projection. This is specifically through fear and expectation. As a state of mind, fear can only disclose particular oncoming events in the world, thus to fear my own death is once again to treat my own death as a case of death, rather than something that is mine. Fear is fear of something specific, particular and determinate.<sup>90</sup> Fear has an object, and when that object is removed I am no longer fearful. For example, I am fearful of frogs. I see a frog on the path in front of me and I am very suddenly extremely fearful. However, once it hops away I am no longer fearful. In this way, fear is always directed at something determinate. Fear also produces within us a sense of bewilderment, a sort of 'forgetting oneself', which is detrimental to authentic being. This is in sharp contrast to anxiety, which is experienced in the face of something which is completely indefinite, and also reveals the insignificance of the world which allows for "an authentic potentiality-for-Being to be lit up."<sup>91</sup> something fear seems to withhold. Thus, fear is a state-of-mind which is an inauthentic approach to death.

The projective parallel to the fear-anxiety distinction is expectation-anticipation. Expecting death is to passively wait for a case of death. For example, when I expect a coffee to taste a certain way, I am waiting for that distinctive taste in my mouth, I am waiting for an actual event. In contrast, when I anticipate the taste of that cup of coffee, it could be said, that in a cognitive sense, I actively go out to meet the possibility of that taste of coffee. In this way, I am making it mine. By expecting death I am thus waiting for a case of death, whereas by anticipating death I own it, and in owning it, everything between now and it.

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<sup>89</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.309 sz.264.

<sup>90</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.391 sz.341.

<sup>91</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.393 sz.343.

There is quite an obvious difference between authentic being-towards-death and inauthentic being-towards-death. The first involves an opening up, and an owning up to one's fundamental being-in-the-world, and the latter involves a closing off, and fleeing in the face of Being.

#### From the Inauthentic to the Authentic

The basis of authentic Being is for Dasein to recognise her possibilities, including her own death, then to actively engage in those possibilities to create projects that she can earnestly participate in throughout her life. Authentic Dasein seems to be something of a rarity. After all, there has been the claim throughout that our everyday behaviour seems to involve inauthenticity. How is it then that Dasein can cross over from inauthentic Dasein to authentic Dasein? The answer lies in guilt and the call to conscience. These are the two concepts we will explore here.

Dasein is able to correct the tendency it has to flee from itself by answering the call to its conscience. Heidegger is not concerned with the traditional sense of what a conscience is, i.e. the type that commands certain actions on particular moral grounds, for example the type conveyed by Jiminy Cricket. For Heidegger, conscience does not offer a specific set of do's and don'ts, it is rather a more generalized form of such calling and being called upon.<sup>92</sup> My conscience calls on me to make a more fundamental choice, and that is the choice of choosing. On this way of conceiving of conscience, my conscience addresses me at every moment of my being. The call to conscience is meant to be something that disrupts us in our average everydayness- it is supposed to pull us away from the unquestioning take we have towards Being and the world. It offers no particular blueprint for life; it doesn't present me with various strategies for dealing with events. Rather, conscience summons Dasein before itself, allowing it to face up to its being.

Furthermore, the call to conscience reveals to Dasein that it is guilty. In the ordinary sense of the term, guilty refers to something specific and determinate, I am guilty of doing this or that, and the guilt is conditional upon my having carried out a specific act: thus, guilt in the ordinary sense has moral implications. However, this is not the case for Heidegger's

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<sup>92</sup> William Blatner, "Essential Guilt and the Transcendental Conscience" in *Heidegger, Authenticity and the Self: Themes from Division Two of Being and Time*, ed. by Denis McManus (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015) p.119



use of the term. It would seem that Heidegger's form of essential guilt seems to be a presupposition for the possibility of moral guilt.<sup>93</sup> Sadly, if you were thinking that this is where some Heideggerian ethics were going to emerge, then think again. Heidegger suggests that guilt points to a more general deficiency or disposition. That it is to say that we are guilty in our being because Dasein isn't itself the basis of its own being.<sup>94</sup> In the case of ontological guilt, being-guilty refers to Dasein being responsible for the being that it is.<sup>95</sup> However, Dasein's being is defined by its Being-towards-death, therefore its 'I am' is an 'I am, at some point, not to persist in being'.<sup>96</sup> Perhaps it would be better to define Heidegger's ontological guilt as "Being-the-basis of a nullity."<sup>97</sup> Perhaps even better: a thrown nullity: "In being a basis – that is, in existing as thrown – Dasein constantly lags behind its possibilities. It is never existent before its basis, but only from it and as this basis. Thus "Being-a-basis" means never to have power from one's ownmost Being from the ground up. This "not" belongs to the existential meaning of "thrownness".<sup>98</sup> That is to say that we are thrown into a particular set of values, ends and projects. We are unable to work back on the past, instead we are subjected to it, hence there is a nullity in our thrownness. This form of guilt then is Dasein's being subject to demands that consist in who it already is.<sup>99</sup> This kind of nullity limits my projection; it limits my projection for which I am the ground. Therefore there is also a nullity running through our projection. By choosing who we wish to be, by following certain values, and setting ourselves certain projects, we are inevitably not choosing other routes, as we are not able to choose everything. My projection limits me as well as identifying me.<sup>100</sup> Heidegger is emphasising the fact that we are given over to the task of existing, placed in a situation which isn't of our making, but from which we must choose how to live, and to do so knowing that I am a finite being. It is in this way that we are guilty by virtue of being human. Heidegger is also drawing attention to the fact that it is a problem for my being that who I am trying to be and that I am also

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<sup>93</sup> Blatner, p.116.

<sup>94</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.330 sz. 285.

<sup>95</sup> George Pattison, "Death, Guilt and Nothingness in Luther, Kierkegaard, and Being and Time" in *Heidegger, Authenticity and the Self: Themes from Division Two of Being and Time*, ed. by Denis McManus (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015) p.59.

<sup>96</sup> Pattison, p.59.

<sup>97</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.329 sz.283.

<sup>98</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.330 sz.284.

<sup>99</sup> Blatner, p.118.

<sup>100</sup> Richardson, p.155.

already just so.<sup>101</sup> After all, Dasein is present and yet to be at the same moment.<sup>102</sup> Despite these problems that occur because of our Being-guilty, and the (generally) negative language that seems to surround the concept of 'Guilty!' in section 58, Heidegger states that we can never overcome our guilt, in fact to dismiss our Being-guilty would be inauthentic, instead our task is to face up to our guilt authentically.<sup>103</sup> How we can do that will be explained shortly.

It may be useful to show conscience, Being-guilty within the structure of care. Heidegger identifies the three elements of care as projection, thrownness and discourse.

The third dimension, discourse, is an existentials. When care is realized authentically, Dasein experiences discourse as reticence: "...the mode of Articulative discourse which belongs to wanting to have a conscience, is one of reticence."<sup>104</sup>, where being reserved, and ignoring the chatter of idle talk aids Dasein in hearing the call of conscience: "Only in reticence, therefore, is this silent discourse understood appropriately in wanting to have a conscience. Moreover, Dasein experiences projection onto guilt as a possible way of Being in which it takes responsibility, and recognizes the essential structure of the nullity at the heart of Being."<sup>105</sup> Lastly, Dasein experiences thrownness as anxiety, a state-of-mind that discloses the possibility of its nullity, and it's non-existence- its Being-towards-death. The unitary structure of authentic care is thus reticence, guilt and anxiety. This structure is understood as resoluteness: "This distinctive and authentic disclosedness, which is attested in Dasein itself by its conscience – this reticence self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety – we call "resoluteness"."<sup>106</sup> And resoluteness has the effect of extracting Dasein from the ontological clutches of the 'they'. Therefore, the key to authenticity lies in resoluteness.

#### Inauthentic vs. authentic conversation

Here, I will go into further detail on the nature of an authentic discussion in general. Such a discussion is different from idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity. I suppose the question

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<sup>101</sup> Richardson, p.156.

<sup>102</sup> Charles E. Scott "Care and Authenticity" in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts* Ed. By Bret W. Davis (Durham, Acumen: 2011)

<sup>103</sup> Richardson, p.157.

<sup>104</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.342 sz.296.

<sup>105</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.353 sz. 305.

<sup>106</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.343 sz.297.

then is, what, in general, differentiates an authentic conversation from an inauthentic conversation?

Inauthentic conversation seems to centre around the idea that the conversation is about something that has been said groundlessly, has been passed on, and “amounts to perverting the act of disclosing into an act of closing off.”<sup>107</sup> Inauthentic conversation doesn’t allow for new inquiry, or disputation, teamed with the groundless nature of the content; inauthentic conversation doesn’t allow for genuine understanding.<sup>108</sup> This is partly because those that are involved in the discussion don’t fully grasp the concepts or terms that they are discussing, they are simply absorbing what they are told, and internalising it as their own idea or understanding. Moreover, the people in this discussion are not authentic Dasein, therefore, on a deeper level, it would be difficult for them to genuinely understand concepts in the conversation, as they don’t truly understand fundamentally what it is to be Dasein. Thus, inauthentic conversation doesn’t involve genuine understanding.<sup>109</sup>

Authentic conversation, or at least authentic Dasein will involve reticence. Heidegger states, “...one’s reticence [Verschwiegenheit] makes something manifest, and does away with ‘idle talk’.”<sup>110</sup> Now, reticence is often defined as keeping silent, and certainly Heidegger does refer to keeping silent, “Keeping silent authentically is possible only in genuine discoursing.”<sup>111</sup> This could be interpreted as stating that authentic conversation is a form of keeping quiet. However, I prefer a slightly different reading of reticence, and keeping quiet, one that involves a reservation about speaking without care or consideration about what she is saying. I believe that you can still have an authentic conversation, as well as deliberating carefully over what you wish to say before you say it. Having the original German word here is invaluable; Verschwiegenheit translates to the English word discretion, hinting that my preferred reading of reticence might in fact be closer to the word discretion and reservation, rather than the phrase ‘keeping silent’.

Authentic conversation would be the inverse of idle talk; it would involve critically examining topics, distinguishing between genuine understanding and superficial chit-chat, in order to reveal the importance and indeed relevance of the topic being discussed, through

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<sup>107</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.213 sz.169.

<sup>108</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.213 sz.168.

<sup>109</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.214 sz.169.

<sup>110</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.208 sz.165.

<sup>111</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.208 sz.165.

dialogue and language. This wouldn't be a form of curiosity, in the Heideggerian sense, as authentic conversation wouldn't be for endless frivolous stimulation, but rather would be a pursuit of disclosing Being, and dwelling as Being-in-the-world, as opposed to being closed off from the world and Being. It is the type of conversation where ideas and norms will be questioned, for example a topic of authentic conversation might be, voting in elections. This conversation would involve every member carefully deliberating over how they feel about the topic; proposing (with discretion) their own opinions on the subject, that would hopefully be based on a well-rounded understanding of the subject; while critically engaging with the opinions of others.

Where do we stand now?

In Division Two, Heidegger has provided the reader with a fuller account of the existential analytic of Dasein. He does this by drawing on Being-towards-death and the altered structures of care which emerge from an authentic or inauthentic approach to that finality. This has supplied the reader with a useful way of viewing our own inauthentic or authentic approach to our finite Being. The exploration into this account, and all the concepts involved will aid us later when it comes to discussing contemporary British politics. Something that seems rather pressing for my project is an account of authenticity and the other. Lawrence Vogel's *The Fragile "We"* will get us off to a running start on this topic.

Vogel's *The Fragile 'We'*

Lawrence Vogel's *The Fragile "We"*, is a presentation of three interpretations of authentic existence, that could plausibly be included, or at least alluded to in Heidegger's *BT*. Vogel's interpretations try to combat the critics that charge Heidegger's account of authenticity as being morally nihilistic. I will explore all three interpretations below.

The Existentialist Interpretation

This account aligns itself with the view that Heidegger is primarily an existentialist, especially with regards to his account of authenticity. The interpretation draws on Heidegger's authentic being-onto-death. Being-onto-death individualises, in a way that

never occurs in any other scenario. When Dasein faces being-unto-death authentically, she finds out what really matters to her, not only that, but what matters to her is her responsibility. In this way being-unto-death is world revealing, instead of troubling and self-preoccupying.<sup>112</sup> It would seem that morals, in this interpretation, would come under the questions, ‘what matters to me?’, ‘what do I think is good/bad?’, and because of this morality would become dependent on each individual person.

Although this seems to be quite a faithful reading of *BT*, it also “looks one-sided”.<sup>113</sup> Not only that, but Heidegger himself rejects the label existentialist. He rejects the label because the idea that individuals are responsible for creating values and morals ex nihilo presupposes a kind of Cartesian dualism between object and subject that Heidegger’s sees his fundamental ontology as aiming to overcome.<sup>114</sup> Vogel suggests that there is something fundamental missing from the existentialist interpretation, and that is authentic historicity and the authority of tradition.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, the existentialist interpretation does not cover all aspects of authentic existence.

#### The Historicist Interpretation

The existentialist interpretation wasn’t, and couldn’t be, stretched far enough to cover the community, it seemed to be far too individualistic. This is where the historicist interpretation comes in. As Vogel states, “...the account of historicity shifts the locus of authority onto the inherited and shared past.”<sup>116</sup> So, how exactly can this interpretation achieve that? It can achieve this because historicity is centrally based on Dasein’s thrownness. As Dasein, we can never simply create values and traditions ex nihilo, we rely on our heritage. Thus, we are somewhat limited within the space of possibilities that this pre-defined world offers us. Historicity refers to how we cope with our thrownness. Authentic historicity is when Dasein critically engages with her past and the traditions that have been handed down to her, and then goes on to hand down to herself the possibilities that have, in turn, been handed down to her.<sup>117</sup> In this way, she isn’t simply taking onboard

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<sup>112</sup> Vogel, p.46.

<sup>113</sup> Vogel, p.49.

<sup>114</sup> Vogel, p.43.

<sup>115</sup> Vogel, p.49.

<sup>116</sup> Vogel, p.51.

<sup>117</sup> Vogel, p.51.

her historicity without thinking about it, she is thoughtfully analysing her possibilities within this pre-defined world and choosing for herself the ones that are important to her.

But let's not view historicity as something that is, again, individualistic. Historicity, crucially involves a recognition of other people. Primarily, this is because our history comes from others; we are amongst other people when we enter the world. This is how we can have historicity and thrownness in the first place. Furthermore, our own personal fate is said to be tied to communal destiny and our own freedom is related to the freedom of others.<sup>118</sup> This part in particular is worth unpacking. It is when Heidegger starts discussing fate that being-towards-death begins to connect to historicity. Once Dasein authentically realises her mortality she makes possibilities that were previously implicit in her historical situation explicit.<sup>119</sup> This allows Dasein to have the possibility of dying fatefully, instead of blindly, because she has an understanding of what is urgent, important and compelling in her situation.<sup>120</sup> Individual fate seems to be tied to communal destiny, and this is because our historizing is always a co-historizing. Vogel suggest that "If "fate" signifies the way Dasein takes hold of itself through a resolute relationship to the events of its time "destiny" signifies the essential connection between the individual and his community of people."<sup>121</sup> Surely, it is with this connection between individual fate and communal destiny that means that historicity has fixed the problem of the interpretation being too individualistic. It would seem that authenticity can be linked with the individual and the community.

Part of Vogel's project is to suggest an interpretation that allows for an authentic 'we', but provides a way of reading Heidegger that doesn't lead to evaluative nihilism. The historicist interpretation achieves the first part, but not the second.

### The Cosmopolitan Interpretation

The third interpretation that Vogel presents is one that relies on authentic Being-with-Others and the authority of the other person.<sup>122</sup> I find this interpretation very

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<sup>118</sup> Vogel, p.50.

<sup>119</sup> Vogel, p.52.

<sup>120</sup> Vogel, p.52.

<sup>121</sup> Vogel, p.53.

<sup>122</sup> Vogel, p.69.

compelling, however it should be noted that this interpretation relies on a part of *BT* that is short, and quite under-described, thus making this interpretation probably more reconstruction than direct reading from Heidegger's text.

Vogel starts by stating that "It [historicality] offers no account of the sense that all other human beings share in "our" destiny and that honouring this requires listening to the perspectives of others from beyond the horizon of my or our prejudices, of suspending our projections for the sake of others who may have been excluded."<sup>123</sup> Therefore, in the cosmopolitan account, Vogel aims to combat the problems that the historicist account left unsolved. Vogel hopes to present a reading of Heidegger that allows for the possibility that "...the authentic individual possesses a kind of moral conscience: a feeling not only of self-responsibility but also of responsibility to others."<sup>124</sup> Vogel hopes to achieve this by drawing attention to Heidegger's concept of liberating solicitude.

Liberating solicitude emerges from authentic Being-towards-death. Initially this seems surprising because being-towards-death appears to individualise, however Vogel suggests that although Dasein faces death alone without any support from others, it doesn't actually isolate her from others but enables a sort of relationship to them (liberating solicitude), that only becomes available within the framework of authenticity.<sup>125</sup> In liberating solicitude I am letting the other be, I'm not actively helping her with her projects, I'm not interfering in her freedom, rather I am letting her work it all out for herself. Liberating solicitude is thus leaping-ahead, it also means becoming the conscience of another.<sup>126</sup> Becoming the conscience of another doesn't sound like Dasein is letting the other be, however by becoming the conscience of another I can help the other face her own anxious self-responsibility, I actually help to heighten her awareness that her possibilities are ultimately for her to choose and resolve upon alone.<sup>127</sup> It is worth saying that it is only when the other wants to have a conscience, and is ready for anxiety that they will hear the call, but Dasein can play a special role by provoking the other to listen. This sort of relationship is similar to, for example, the relationship between a good parent and their child. The good parent will want to help their child when they can but ultimately the

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<sup>123</sup> Vogel, p.69.

<sup>124</sup> Vogel, p.70.

<sup>125</sup> Vogel, p.73.

<sup>126</sup> Vogel, p.75.

<sup>127</sup> Vogel, p.75.

parents' role is to prepare the child for life in the world, when they have to fend for themselves. The child might never be able to develop resilience and good problem-solving skills if the parent didn't set a good example, and let the child make her own mistakes.

For Vogel, the crux of an authentic 'We', and thus the crux of his cosmopolitan interpretation is, "We coexist authentically and so form an "authentic We" when each feels that he belongs to a common project yet encourages the others to pursue the project in a way that attests to their own individuality."<sup>128</sup> This interpretation would seem to be the one that would lend itself well to an account of how we should interact with others, specifically within a community of people, and wider communities. Once we recognise people as possibilities in themselves, as people who are Being-in-the-world in their own right, instead of just things that we encounter, we can start to sympathise and thus work with others, and not just others that we identify with.

Where do we stand now?

Vogel's three interpretations provide the reader with three ways in which one can read Heidegger's account of the authentic person and the authentic people. In my eyes, there are elements of the three interpretations that work well. The existentialist interpretation has elements that seem to ring true within *BT*, such as the idea that Being-towards-death individualises. The idea of co-historizing that we gain from the historicist account, means we don't become too isolated from others. Moreover, liberating solicitude pushes our community further, so we can include others who might not have the same historical context as me. These elements of Vogel's interpretations provide a useful foundation for authentic Mitsein.

One thing that I found particularly interesting was located in the cosmopolitan interpretation. Vogel suggested that individuation is the condition of our being authentically brought together.<sup>129</sup> This individuation relies on anxious Dasein. Is there a way then that we can delve further into anxiety in order to show that alongside liberating solicitude we can have liberating anxiety? This is something I hope to explore further in my section Authentic

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<sup>128</sup> Vogel, p.79.

<sup>129</sup> Vogel, p.79.



Mitsein. Said section will draw on a lot of Vogel's ideas so as to produce my own interpretation of the authentic, albeit fragile, 'We'.

## Authentic Mitsein

In *BT*, one can generally draw up a picture of what it is to be authentic and contrastingly what it is to be inauthentic, according to Heidegger. However, there is something I find lacking in his account, and that is authentic Mitsein. This lack is surprising, partly because of the emphasis that Heidegger puts on Mitsein. He states, "...the world is always the One that I share with others. The world of Dasein is a with-world. Being-in is Being-with-others."<sup>130</sup> It would seem necessary for Heidegger to provide, not only an account of inauthentic Mitsein, but also authentic Mitsein.

In this section I hope to offer my own reconstruction of Heidegger's thoughts in order to accommodate for such a modification. Ultimately I will be focussed on drawing out the concept of authentic Mitsein that I believe to be hinted at, but overlooked in *BT*. With my aim being to set the groundwork for authentically engaging with others.

## Why anxiety?

I suppose the question is why anxiety; why is it important for anxiety and Mitsein to be combined? For me, the answer is relatively simple. Anxiety opens up the possibility of authentic Dasein. When Dasein experiences an intense bout of anxiety, she is undergoing a personal transformation, one which tears her away from falling, and allows her to realise the capacity for authenticity.<sup>131</sup> Anxiety is the key in starting to unlock and acknowledge authenticity. Without it, authentic Dasein seems to be out of reach. Anxiety is thus a crucial concept for Heidegger. If anxiety is the door to authenticity, it might follow that anxiety could advance a form of authentic Mitsein, one in which Mitsein doesn't have to be falling. Dasein is also ontologically Mitsein, therefore I must also be Mitsein when I am authentic. Anxiety can be authentically experienced by Dasein, therefore it should follow that there

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<sup>130</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.155 sz.118.

<sup>131</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.233 sz.188.

must be some kind of connection between Mitsein and anxiety. I shall call this authentic anxiety, with regards to Mitsein, co-anxiety.

Anxiety individualises, it is objectless, highlighting the 'nothingness' of one's own existence; anxiety discloses Dasein's responsibility and freedom.<sup>132</sup> It would seem then that it would be difficult to comprehend anxiety as a group. When I say that anxiety individualises it could mean that one faces anxiety alone, and from it one then focuses on their projects alone. Certainly, there is a sense in which this is correct. After all, it is necessary to recognise our own freedom and responsibility in order to be authentic Dasein. On the other hand, this doesn't necessarily mean that we are cut off forever, in our anxiety. Another element of anxiety individualising, and one I believe can work alongside the above reading, is that it individualises by lifting Dasein out of the inauthentic Das Man, and potentially opening up the possibility for authentic Mitsein as well as authentic Dasein. Authentic co-anxiety in Das Man seem impossible, simply because Das Man is a form of inauthentic being with others, thus co-anxiety, a form of authentic being-with-others, would be unlikely to occur in Das Man. However, that doesn't mean that authentic co-anxiety in Mitsein is. So, what form could it take, and more specifically how could we achieve this? In this section I will explore the possible answers to these questions.

#### Co-anxiety

It could be that authentic co-anxiety within Mitsein is more subtle than we realise. If authentically realising anxiety allows for authentic Dasein, then it should also allow for authentic Mitsein. Authentically realising anxiety is a necessary condition for those that have authentically chosen projects. In authentic anxiety I realise that there is nothing 'out there' that grounds my projects, however I still look to embrace projects as part of my chosen developing identity. If I am embracing a project, then I am necessarily embracing something that is shared. In the sense of presupposing a shared meaning and significance. In order to embrace my chosen project I must embrace it as shared. Since this has come about through anxiety means co-anxiety. As long as Dasein have recognised anxiety authentically than co-anxiety, and thus authentic Mitsein is possible.

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<sup>132</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.233 sz.188.

It would seem that co-anxiety would work best when both parties had authentically realised anxiety. Again, phenomenologically speaking, this could be possible; I could discuss authentic anxiety, and what it means to authentically recognise anxiety, with someone who also understands what the term 'authentic anxiety' means. If both parties have experienced anxiety, and then recognised its ownmost potentiality-for-Being and have not sunk back into the world dictated to by the 'they', intuitively an authentic discussion of anxiety between both parties could occur. After all, surely Heidegger would argue that at the very least he presented anxiety in an authentic light in *BT*. If he has the ability to write about anxiety without it necessarily being inauthentic then I would argue that those who have experienced, and recognised anxiety authentically could certainly discuss it authentically between themselves. Furthermore, if both parties had authentically realised anxiety then it would seem unlikely that the discussion between them about anxiety could turn into a form of inauthenticity. Surely, then, it could be said that this interaction is a form of authentically being-with-others.

#### Co-historizing

So, we have an account of co-anxiety that leads to authentic Mitsein. Although there is not much textual evidence for this account in *BT*, perhaps there is other evidence that could back up my general project to propose a form of authentic Mitsein, as well as allowing for co-anxiety. This comes in the form of co-historizing. This account of authentic Mitsein will be familiar to you under the term 'The Historicist Interpretation' that Vogel presents.

One of the biggest benefits of co-historizing is simply that Heidegger himself suggests a form of authentic Mitsein. The fact that authentic Mitsein is possible, and has been proposed in *BT*, provides more wiggle-room for other forms of authentic Mitsein to follow, such as co-anxiety. Additional ways of conceiving of authentic Mitsein within the framework of *BT* could follow quite logically from Heidegger's explicit form of authentic Mitsein, within the context of historizing.

Where do we stand now?

I have matched authentic co-anxiety with co-historizing as my foundation for authentic Mitsein. Paired with Vogel's account, we could have liberating co-historizing and

authentic co-anxiety in hand with liberating solicitude; revealing a well-rounded authentic form of Being-with-others.

So far we have an account that allows for authentic Mitsein, an account that can provide us with a way of seeing our interactions with others as a positive. This reconstructed account is something that relies on being-towards-death, co-historizing, liberating solicitude, and co-anxiety. Although this provides us with a way of viewing Dasein within the structure of Mitsein, it doesn't denote a way of life that can aid us when we discuss politics in more detail- an ethos of some kind is wanting. Of course, a Heideggerian ethos would be ideal. Something of this sort is presented by Werner Marx, in *Towards a Phenomenological Ethics*.

### Werner Marx's Phenomenological Ethics

Werner Marx took over Heidegger's chair at Freiburg in 1976, and would later set out to construct a phenomenological ethics, that draws heavily on Heideggerian concepts. Thus, it is fair to say that his 'ethos' could be viewed as a Heideggerian reconstruction, an ethical follow-up to Heidegger's *BT*. Like Heidegger before him, Marx is wishing to move away from traditional metaphysics, thus labelling his ethics as non-metaphysical.

### From Sociality and Mortality to Compassion

Marx is primarily concerned with the possibility of the transformation of ethical bearing on the basis of an experience that results from emotion and thus plays a role in the formation of virtues.<sup>133</sup> He begins by questioning how it can be that a person who experiences his own mortality and sociality can suddenly become aware of his responsibility and gain the virtue of compassion.<sup>134</sup> He suggests that people are generally indifferent towards each other, and that in our everyday living we are in a sort of imprisonment, as we are isolated from others.<sup>135</sup>

Marx presents two examples as to how the capacity for compassion might arise: mortality and sociality. Mortality: the attunement of horror can bring us before our

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<sup>133</sup> 'Emotion' here could also be called the Heideggerian concept, attunement.

<sup>134</sup> Werner Marx, *Towards a Phenomenological Ethics: Ethos and the Life-World*, (State University of New York press, Albany: 1992) p.33.

<sup>135</sup> Marx, p.33.

mortality, as it can displace us from all of our habits and set opinions, and thus can set us off on a path on which any indifference is dissolved. Note that this is not rationality but an ever-increasing emotion (horror) accompanied by a pre-predicative ‘understanding’ that doesn’t proceed by discursive inference though it still belongs to reason.<sup>136</sup> Sociality also makes up our Being: in the face of total extinction Marx says that the attunement of horror can not only overcome indifference, but can lead us to an appropriation of social virtue.<sup>137</sup> He also adds that given we are in a state based on freedom and law, our rationality does also play a part.<sup>138</sup> It is key here to acknowledge the way that Marx is using the concept ‘rationality’. For Marx, rationality refers to a kind of pre-reflective immediate practical insight that one gets in a particular situation which actualises itself in an appropriate reaction. In this sense rationality is an insight that guides our attunement.<sup>139</sup>

Mortality is a key part to Marx’s ethics, therefore it is worth deliberating over it further.<sup>140</sup> Marx suggests that attunement issued from our own mortality is not only disclosing and concealing, but also has the power to lead us off on a path that leads to the ‘old virtues’.<sup>141</sup> The ‘old virtues’ seem to be those of compassion and community, a sense of caring for others. He suggests that in the face of our mortality we recognise, in horror, that we are fragile, that we are forlorn.<sup>142</sup> Through this displacement we begin to yearn for community. My indifference towards others changes, they become ‘others of myself’, not only am I able to see the other, but I can also hear his call. Marx states that this transformation hasn’t come about through the power of thought, nor through the work of a dialectical concept; but rather it is a transformation which has come about in my emotional life; my attunement.<sup>143</sup>

#### Sympathising-with

Marx introduces a new type of Being-with, which he calls sympathising-with. This concept can be understood in the everyday sense of the word, a feeling of understanding

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<sup>136</sup> Marx, p.41.

<sup>137</sup> Marx, p.41.

<sup>138</sup> Marx, p.41.

<sup>139</sup> Marx, p.41.

<sup>140</sup> It might be worth viewing it as similar to Heidegger’s authentic Being-towards-death.

<sup>141</sup> Marx, p.47.

<sup>142</sup> Marx, p.47. Note that this feeling of horror is not Heidegger’s anxiety in the face of death.

<sup>143</sup> Marx, p.51.

between people.<sup>144</sup> Marx suggests that it can be incorporated into the existential analytic. This is because he states that only sympathising-with grounds true intersubjectivity.<sup>145</sup> So in this sense, sympathising-with, at least for Marx, is an a priori condition of authentic intersubjectivity. He goes as far to say that the measure of compassion is, in some part based on our ability to sympathise with the other. Just as *Befindlichkeit* is the a priori transcendental condition for mood, so sympathising-with is for intersubjectivity. This sympathising attunement can even transform the other: person B can be aided in her transformation to a compassionate person, because of person's A compassion towards her. It discloses the attunement of compassion to the other. It would seem then, that compassionate behaviour has a knock-on effect, which of course, does make sense, often when somebody carries out a compassionate action, others might in turn be moved to become more compassionate.

It might be useful to frame Marx's sympathising-with in more Heideggerian terms. It would seem to me that sympathising-with has a very similar effect as leaping-ahead does. After all, both are able to encourage the other to become more compassionate/authentic without taking the responsibility or choice away from the other. Neither are enforcing authenticity or compassion on the other. Moreover, sympathising-with and leaping-ahead are both able to create a space which not only allows the other to freely become authentic, but also incites authenticity within the realm of intersubjectivity. I suppose the main difference between the two is that sympathising-with is an a priori condition for compassion, whereas leaping-ahead is not, which seems to give sympathising-with more *gravitas*.

Sympathising is such a common way of connecting with other people: feeling sorry for someone because you understand the feeling that they are experiencing is a normal way of interacting with others, and can often help cement relationships. After all, as Marx has recognised, sympathy often leads to compassion. In contrast, lack of sympathy for others can in fact isolate you, and can actually aid in the breaking down of relationships. Therefore, perhaps sympathising-with is actually the a priori condition for compassion. This realisation is something that will be useful when deliberating over intersubjectivity within politics.

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<sup>144</sup> Marx, p.54.

<sup>145</sup> Marx, p.59.

An idea I would like to entertain further is, could it not be the case that co-anxiety fits quite nicely alongside sympathising-with? If it is possible that we can experience a form of co-anxiety, which in turn has the potential to bond people together, then presumably sympathising-with would come into play: I experience anxiety, then co-anxiety with another person, this leads to me sympathising with the other, as I know how she feels, I recognise that her anxiety is similar to mine: it has displaced us. This then leads to compassion from me, and also from her as she can recognise that we are sharing an emotion / attunement. Although Marx uses the word horror, I would argue that his definition of horror (as has been presented above) is more or less the same as Heidegger's use of the word anxiety, thus it is possible to give an account that incorporates sympathising-with and co-anxiety.

### Healing Force

Marx references a 'healing force', as the disclosed possibility of the capacity for compassion, this is because he claims it works in a 'giving' sort of manner. He goes on to suggest that it is with the experience of 'nearness' of other people that the healing force of compassion grows. This seems to be, quite literally, having people close to you, seeing and hearing them often. It is in this nearness that we get to know the other, but also the "true regard for oneself" grows.<sup>146</sup> Marx suggests that the healing force is absolute and absolutely certain; "this absoluteness and this certainty also ground the decisive essential feature of the nonmetaphysical essence of measure: its binding force which is valid for all cases."<sup>147</sup>

### Four Stages to Ethics

It would seem then, that in its reduced form, Marx's phenomenological ethics has four stages to it: (first stage) we are in a state of average indifference when it comes to interacting with others, (second stage) displacement when faced with our own mortality, (third stage) we identify with others as sharers in the same fragile and uncertain fate, (fourth stage), which in turn creates a healing moment, a sympathising-with, which involves compassion.

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<sup>146</sup> Marx, p.63.

<sup>147</sup> Marx, p.64.

## Compassion as Measure

There is a further and important step to Marx's ethics: compassion becomes the measure for the individual. This part of Marx's ethos draws on sociality, and also on Hegel: namely the relation of one individual to another, and the relation of one to 'we', with regards to freedom. He constructs a path, one in which transforms man and his sociality. First, comes a "generalisation of all that which comportment in the life-world has sedimented in the form of norms of self-interest."<sup>148</sup> Any 'selfish' actions or norms would have to be transformed into an attitude that serves the collective – hence generalising. Secondly, "the attuned intuitive-rational seeing of what community really is and the correlative hearing of its claims would have to be one of interiorization."<sup>149</sup> Both of these steps would contribute to the possibility of a person leading their life oriented towards compassion, and that ultimately compassion would be the measure for the individual; acting in reference to compassion in a consistent manner.

So, an individual could be leading a life of relative indifference to those around her, then her own mortality stares her down, creates in her a feeling of horror. This attunement truly displaces her, makes her recognise her own fragility, she searches for a sense of community in those around her, so as to diffuse this feeling of horror she has. She begins to see the other as like her, just as fragile, and she recognises herself in the other. Moreover, she shows compassion to the other, as she knows that they can also feel this horror at their own mortality. This in turn, can help the 'other' grow more compassionate, due to her initial compassion that she shares with him, creating something like a joining force, a 'healing moment'. She becomes more aware of the community she's in, the people around her that are not so dissimilar to her. She views her selfish, self-interested actions as just that, and tries to act in a way that benefits the collective, rather than just herself. This is because she is able to comprehend what the community/ the collective is and also what it needs. Furthermore, she is able to compare her state against others, using compassion, namely freedom as the measure of whether a state is good or bad. Therefore, out of mortality springs forth a phenomenological ethics.

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<sup>148</sup> Marx, p.79.

<sup>149</sup> Marx, p.79.



## Marx and Politics

Marx suggests that we have to have order in society, laws, government in order for there to be a social structure. He claims that a welfare state would be able to satisfy man's sociality, his essence. This is because it would create the external condition necessary, so that compassion could exert its influence in the social realm.<sup>150</sup> Inherent in this welfare state would be the protection of people's freedoms, rights, as a principle of equality, together with the principle of freedom.

Interestingly enough, Marx makes reference to a 'model' in a similar way that Heidegger refers to 'heroes'.<sup>151</sup> He suggests that ideally the immediate models would be the civil servants that form the executive in the state. He believes that politicians, civil servants, protectors of the state should be models for other people to follow, that people should look up to them, and even aim to follow the standard that they've set.

In fact, the political state seems to be quite important to Marx. He later states that now more than ever we should be a united people, and gives the example of the atomic bomb, and how we should be facing threats as a unified, cohesive whole. So, although he isn't suggesting an ethos which is specific to politics, it is clearly an area he feels would benefit from such an ethos.

## One and the Many

Something that is important within Marx's ethics is that it doesn't rely on an individual who is shut off from others, or even a group that can't be individuals (das Man). He is keen to state that man has a two-fold way of Being: "man is a 'one' which is not closed-off with respect to the others and is nevertheless able to retain what is unique in him."<sup>152</sup> Marx suggests that the kind person would only ever see other people as fellow-men, never as alien to her, only ever as people who are nearest to her. She can also recognise that essence lies in being in the company of her fellow men, without losing sight of her selfhood.<sup>153</sup> This is a crucial part of Marx's ethics, especially for our project. This is primarily because we don't want to be too individualistic in our ethics, after all we want to

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<sup>150</sup> Marx, p.81.

<sup>151</sup> Marx, p.82.

<sup>152</sup> Marx, p.136.

<sup>153</sup> Marx, p.135.

allow for the possibility of authentic Mitsein. But we also don't want to go too far the other way and create a Mitsein which is das Man in its nature. Marx has been able to create an intermediary point between the individual and the collective, one which allows for authenticity.

Where do we stand now?

Marx gives us a Heideggerian ethics which starts with indifference and ends with compassion. This is something that is going to be invaluable when we start to discuss politics, as indifference and indeed negative relationships could be said to be rife within that sphere.

Now, let us recall Vogel and his 'fragile we'. Combining elements of his existentialist, historicist, and cosmopolitan account seemed to create the best building blocks for an account of an authentic Mitsein. Then we explored anxiety further to potentially include a form of authentic co-anxiety, to further support the chance of an authentic Mitsein. As we discussed earlier, co-anxiety seems to fit quite well with Marx's sympathising-with. Not only that, but in general, it would seem that Marx's phenomenological ethics further bolsters the claim that a Heideggerian reconstruction is possible, and that this specific reconstruction of a Heideggerian ethics would allow for an authentic Mitsein.

This is all important for what we will explore next - politics. If we are wanting to construct Heideggerian solutions to contemporary British politics, we need to firstly check that it is possible. Part of that possibility was to determine whether Heidegger had an account of authentic Mitsein. Being with other people (in the normal sense of the term) is intrinsic to politics, so it was important to delve into a form of authentic Mitsein, and indeed to uncover an ethics that could be drawn from it. Now that we have an account of authentic Mitsein, and Marx's reconstructed Heideggerian ethics, we are in good standing to begin exploring contemporary politics.

## Contemporary Politics

Politics as of yet, has merely been sprinkled over the top of my explorations, a small addition but not the bulk of the project – this is soon to be rectified. All of this delving into Heidegger has not just been out of mere curiosity. My aim is to apply Heidegger's

philosophy, and the Heideggerian reconstructions, to contemporary British politics, although it could be applied to politics more generally. This is all in the hope that some form of insight will be gained. I will begin by exploring some of the issues that I believe are prevalent in contemporary British politics, and then I will move onto the potential Heideggerian solutions to these issues.

### Problems within Contemporary British Politics

I will be discussing contemporary politics from the stand point of someone who lives in Britain and is engaged in the project of politics. In this way, my focus will be on contemporary British politics. Initially I intend to propose the main issues, as I see them, with British politics today. I'm going to approach these issues with Heideggerian-tinted glasses on. I will therefore frame the issues in terms of inauthenticity. This inauthenticity will be centred around the idea that today, British politics is very *das Man* in nature, to the point where our approach and engagement in politics needs to change.

### Relationship breakdown

One of the over-arching issues with contemporary British politics seems to be a break down between relationships. At the moment it would seem that various forms of intersubjectivity have manifested themselves negatively, as *das Man*. Whatever the specifics of the breakdown may be, many relationships have turned sour, and are not operating as well as they could be. Fundamentally, I'm suggesting that we aren't viewing other people as like ourselves, we aren't seeing ourselves in the other. In this way the wants, needs, and opinions of others seem alien to us. But not only that, by refusing to acknowledge the other we are not truly recognising ourselves; our own Being. We aren't acknowledging a fundamental part of our own Being – our Being-with. We have removed ourselves from the possibility for authentic *Mitsein*, and have found ourselves located in the average everydayness of *das Man*. This is problematic in the current setting as politics relies on people; it relies on people working together, communicating effectively, and discussing opinions. Thus, with a breakdown in *Mitsein*, comes a breakdown in politics. It is worth delving into this problematic area more thoroughly.

The relationship between Members of Parliament and the voters has always, and presumably, will always be an interesting one. The voters rely on the MP that they collectively chose to honour their agreement, to fight on the voter's behalf in parliament. In the same sense, MP's rely on voters in order for them to stay as members of parliament; without the support of the voters, MPs can't get their foot in the door. The underlying belief here is that (in an ideal world) MPs want to help improve areas of government and politics, not just for themselves but so that the lives of others will benefit in some way. It could (or should) be argued that most people in politics, get into it with the hope that they will be able to make a difference and improve people's lives. Surely then, a good working relationship is needed. There is a clear relationship then between MPs and constituents, a reciprocal one which also involves a sense of trust.

Unfortunately, in more recent years there has been a growing sense of animosity between MPs and voters. In fact an opinion poll of British voters, collected in 2012 found that 62% of those polled agreed that "politicians tell lies all the time".<sup>154</sup> It would seem likely that either this percentage has remained much the same in 2019, or it has increased. I would argue that part of this assumption is based on the way Brexit has been panning out – which is badly. I'm not just referring to the recent catastrophic votes on many aspects of Brexit, but also the way the Brexit referendum was framed on both sides.

The Leave and the Remain campaigns were fundamentally based on hypothetical eventualities, both sides have since been accused of running flawed and misleading campaigns. In fact, Boris Johnson has since been ordered to appear in court over claims he lied during the EU referendum campaign- he stated that the UK gave the EU £350m a week. Further examples include: the Leave campaign claimed that 'The money saved from leaving the EU will result in the NHS getting £350m a week', since, the UK Statistics Authority has stated that this claim was a "clear misuse of official statistics".<sup>155</sup> On the other side, the Remain campaign claimed that: 'Two thirds of British jobs in manufacturing are dependent on demand from Europe.', this was claimed after looking at outdated analysis, which was

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<sup>154</sup> "Politicians 'lie all the time', says poll" in *The Independent* (5.03.12) (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/politicians-lie-all-the-time-says-poll-7536473.html>) [accessed 04.02.19] (para. 1 of 4)

<sup>155</sup> Jon Stone, "Brexit lies: The demonstrably false claims of the EU referendum campaign" in *The Independent*, (17.12.17) (<https://www.independent.co.uk/infact/brexit-second-referendum-false-claims-eu-referendum-campaign-lies-fake-news-a8113381.html>) [accessed 04.02.19] (para. 5 of 16)

then used to compare two incomparable figures – it is said that the percentage is closer to 15% than 66%.<sup>156</sup> It is understandable why both sides decided to claim such things, these statements provoke a reaction. Using the examples above: for those who believe more money should be spent on the NHS and not on the EU then voting to leave would make sense, and then for those who worry about losing their jobs if they work in manufacturing then voting to remain in the EU, again, would make sense. Both campaigns of course wanted to win, so naturally they wanted people to vote for their side. Sadly this provided the foundation for a lot of scare-mongering techniques, and a lot of hypothetical imprecise claims. For many voters then, the idea that ‘politicians tell lies all the time’ doesn’t seem so far from the truth.

Part of the issue with the above is that instead of treating each other as Beings, the relationship has turned into one similar to that of subject-object. We are viewing others in thing-like terms, instead of someone who is a fellow Dasein. The relationship’s aim was to serve a purpose, for example fair representation in the example above, however it has since broken down, the voters no longer feel like the MP represents their interests: therefore the relationship could be described as un-readiness-to-hand. The relationship has gone from ready-to-hand to unreadiness-to-hand. Not only is the breakdown in the structure problematic, but the way we are perceiving the structure/relationship is broken. The way we interact and relate to people shouldn’t be viewed in equipmental terms, we should instead be treating another person as a fellow Being who has their Being to be.

## Indifference

It could be suggested that we have a feeling of average indifference towards others, the kind that Werner Marx described.<sup>157</sup> After all, if we’re truly honest with ourselves, other than family and friends, do the majority of people really care for their fellow humans, isn’t it true that generally we have a feeling of indifference towards others. It doesn’t necessarily have to be within cities where we see this indifference occur. It could be suggested that there is a diminished sense of community, and heightened indifference, even in smaller

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<sup>156</sup> Stone, (<https://www.independent.co.uk/infact/brexit-second-referendum-false-claims-eu-referendum-campaign-lies-fake-news-a8113381.html>) [accessed 04.02.19] (para. 12 of 16)

<sup>157</sup> Marx, p.1

towns and villages. This lack of community and disconnectedness could be due, in part, to the easily accessible technology we have.

#### Social Media: Disconnected yet connected

Nowadays, we can limit our contact with people if we're inclined; many technological systems are in place for us to be able to do so. Even people we want to interact with we tend to interact with in a disconnected way, for example messaging them instead of seeing them face to face. Of course, Heidegger has a strong distrust in technology, however this is not the stance I'm going to take. I wish to suggest that instead of using technology to enhance our way of interacting with others, and developing supportive community networks, we tend to use it in a way that would reflect *das Man*. For example, on social media, it is easy to get lost in the *they*, to try to emulate certain behaviours, activities, and even aesthetics. There is a sense in which a lot of people compare themselves with others on social media, to the point where it could be argued that social envy is rife on these platforms. Of course, it is still possible to experience these feelings when you're face-to-face with an actual person. However, social media certainly exasperates, and helps cultivate these harmful feelings that ultimately can lead to diminished self-esteem. This isn't obviously an issue for contemporary British politics, however it certainly has a knock on effect. If we are relying on social media for communication, friendship, perhaps even a sense of community, and yet social media can lead to social comparison and social envy, then no wonder we have a general feeling of diminished community. Social media platforms could be part of the cause and the effect of a lack of community, lack of cultural identity, and feelings of hostility towards other people (not just indifference). These feelings will quite naturally have an impact on politics. For example, there will be more of a demand on the political system to try to instil feelings of community. Or even that people are so focussed on what would benefit themselves, and the people they care about, that they vote for fairly selfish policies, even if others gain no benefit from their decision. Again it is another way in which contemporary society promotes self-estrangement.

Another potential issue with social media is that it is a kind of confirmation bias; the apps or websites are coded so that they will display ads, or promote groups for you to join,

based on things you have searched for in the past. You can choose to follow people, hashtags, or groups who you admire – in this way you are manufacturing your own community of people who think in a very similar way to you, perhaps without even realising it. So every time you login to these social media platforms you are confronted with people who are confirming your perspective on things. Thus, social media is a kind of confirmation bias. For example, Emma voted to leave the European Union, many of her friends voted the same way; on top of that she has followed groups that promoted the leave campaign; moreover she has clicked through to a few Daily Mail articles so she is subsequently viewing ads on her profile that again promote leaving the European Union. In this way, her social media platform is confirming the way she has voted, because it is entirely biased. This way of advertising and marketing is probably not going to change, after all the websites want people to keep on using their platforms, they want the user to have a pleasant experience while using their service, therefore promoting things they show an interest in makes sense. If that side of it isn't going to change then how can we begin to phrase an authentic solution to the threat social media poses to politics? In this way, social media seems to embody the spirit of *das Man*!

## Misinformation

Another issue is that of misinformation. It isn't simply that voters were misinformed by politicians but that they didn't do enough to educate themselves on the different issues surrounding Brexit. This can be framed in terms of idle talk: conversing in a critically unexamined way. If more people had looked into the claims that the campaigns were based on, then the scare-mongering techniques and imprecise statements might not have made such an impact on the referendum. There is a sense in which people read the headlines, perhaps they might go so far as to read the beginning of the article, and then they form an opinion. Sometimes statements are questioned but often they aren't. This is especially the case if the author of the article or post is someone that you admire. This way of 'reading-up' on politics doesn't allow you to gather sufficient information. Moreover, the discussions that people were having, on the basis of this way of gathering information was in turn misleading, and allowed uninformed opinions to be passed on. In this way, the political

conversations that people were having were framed in terms of chit-chat and gossip, instead of informed, measured deliberations.

So, although the tactics of both campaigns were misleading, the general public must take responsibility in some part for not fact checking and then basing their vote on something which was categorically incorrect, and in turn for the high levels of idle talk. One of the things that democracy relies on is voter engagement in politics, and that includes voters being up to date and in the know. If the voters don't play their part, in a responsible manner, then the system begins to crumble.

Having said that, it is difficult to decipher what is factual and what is merely speculative. This is provoked further by the ways in which information is presented to us. The media scoop up the aforementioned headlines, as they have a certain shock-factor to them. This is in the hope that the general public will buy their newspaper, or, which is becoming more common, click through to the website that provided the headline. The media is thus promoting the Heideggerian sense of curiosity and ambiguity. They are instilling in us this need for new information, and then providing the means for getting it: by reading their newspaper or webpage, by following certain accounts on social media etc. Not only that but the information we are receiving is becoming more ambiguous, meaning that we are losing all sensitivity to the distinction between artificial chatter and genuine understanding. This Heideggerian 'fascination': the demand to be constantly enthralled and entertained in one way or another, yet becoming numb to the facts, is of course damaging on many accounts. For politics, it means that people are either bored of reading about politics, that the political situation is 'old news', or they are unable to determine fact from fiction. Or as described above: that people are not spending the time to really read articles on politics and come to their own conclusions, therefore they are misinformed.

However irritating it is that article headlines can be misleading, it is understandable as newspapers need something that will captivate the reader. The article may in fact be an informative, fair assessment of the political situation. This is of course the ideal outcome. Whether you agree or not depends on your view on whether the press reflects or leads public opinion. By simply delving into how right-wing or left-wing people believe newspapers are, I think it is fair to come to the conclusion that most of the time news companies have some kind of political agenda. Such a poll was undertaken, out of the eight mainstream newspapers, five were perceived as being right wing (The Daily Mail, The Daily



Express, The Sun, The Telegraph, and The Times), two were perceived as being left-wing (The Guardian and The Mirror) and one was perceived as being centre (The Independent).<sup>158</sup> Whether or not these publications are actually left, right, or centre doesn't seem to matter; the news that we receive from them makes the public believe that they are. The alignment of publications matters because it greatly impacts upon public opinion; if there are more newspapers in circulation that promote right-wing policies and politicians, then it is likely that more people will see these and that those people may have more right-wing beliefs themselves. A fair representation of beliefs and ideas doesn't seem to be reflected in the prominent newspapers in the UK.

### The Bubble

Another kind of misinformation comes in the form of something I'm going to call an 'information bubble'. This occurs when you only have certain types of views, policies, or ideologies on your radar. This effectively blindsides us to the wider range of issues, and manifests itself in shocking results: e.g. the number of people who voted to leave the European Union was a shock to many of us. The information bubble in politics either lulls us into a false sense of security, or (for those who aren't being heard) animates us to cause change and thus become heard. The political sphere can then become very volatile and unpredictable, which of course has knock on effects which are similar in nature. In the run up to Brexit, the polls showed that there was a chance that we would be leaving the European Union, however the majority of people believed that we would remain. It could be argued that this was because of the bubble the majority of us were in at the time. We simply couldn't believe that normal, fairly average people would have very strong views on voting to leave, after all it seemed that the status quo was to remain – however this clearly wasn't the case. We believed this because of the bubble. Clearly this 'shock' result has had negative effects on the UK: with people claiming that the UK's economic growth has slowed while the rest of the world has recorded one of its strongest periods of growth in the past decade. I wish to make it clear that I'm not suggesting that it was the vote to leave the EU that caused the issues necessarily. But rather the issue was that the vote to leave wasn't

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<sup>158</sup> Matthew Smith, "How left or right-wing are the UK's newspapers?" in *Media, Politics & current affairs* 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017, (<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2017/03/07/how-left-or-right-wing-are-uks-newspapers>) (Para 3 of 15) [Accessed 06.03.19]

properly considered as a possibility by many, therefore more thorough precautions were not taken early enough.

Not only can we see how the information bubble is misleading, but also how we are inauthentic. The bubble could easily be described as promoting the attitude that goes with the 'they'.<sup>159</sup> The media, politicians, general public, are getting lost in the they, simply by (even inadvertently) adhering to the information bubble they find themselves in. This is because they are only promoting or absorbing the views and opinions of those that are in their information bubble, they are blind to any other views. Or if we do acknowledge alternative viewpoints, then we are finding shocking what 'they' find shocking.<sup>160</sup> As Heidegger himself admits, this is a normal everyday sort of attitude to have. Turning to the authentic doesn't necessarily prohibit us from viewing things in this way, however it does promote an opening up not only to the other but to their opinions and their perspective, which is something that is wanting in contemporary British politics.

### Political Apathy

There is a reaction to all that I've described above, one of engagement. The spark to try to instil some change in politics might be ignited. This is the ideal reaction. However, the general, perhaps more widespread reaction is one of political apathy. Statements such as 'what's the point', 'my vote won't make a difference anyway', 'politicians will never change' are definitely in circulation. Even if this is relatively close to the truth, it is still problematic. Political apathy traditionally does not help politics progress. It is only with an engagement in politics that change can occur. If the statements above have any foundation, then change does need to occur. Not only is it problematic in a political sense, but also by taking the viewpoint of 'what does it matter', 'my vote won't make a difference', we are rejecting our responsibility and we are also denying ourselves the choice to engage in the project of politics. In this sense political apathy can be viewed as inauthentic, as we are ignoring our responsibility, we are allowing a big part of our lives to play out in front of us, without trying to take part.

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<sup>159</sup> Let's remind ourselves of Heidegger's description of getting lost in the they: "we read, see, and judge about literature and art as they see and judge; likewise, we shrink back from the 'great mass' as they shrink back; we find 'shocking' what they find shocking." Heidegger, *Being and Time* p.164 sz.127.

<sup>160</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time* p.164 sz.127.

Where do we stand now?

So far I've presented a few of the issues I believe we are facing in contemporary British politics. It would seem to me that these issues are off-shoots of the central problem: that we are disconnected from ourselves and from those around us. Or, as Heidegger would frame it, the central problem is that we are inauthentic. Luckily enough for us, there might be a way in which we can present Heideggerian solutions to the issues presented above.

### Heideggerian Solutions to Politics

Something that has become obvious while working through the problems with contemporary British politics is that at the heart there is a deep-rooted problem with the way we view ourselves and the way in which we interact with those around us. It could be said that we are firmly located, and lost, in the 'they' of das Man. If the issue is in fact that we are interacting with one another in an inauthentic way, then we need to try to convert that into the authentic. This 'conversion' of sorts has been described above; if we recall Vogel and Marx's reconstructions, and also the work we did surrounding co-anxiety. Due to the reconstructions and interpretations, we are able to suggest the general way we can turn the inauthentic into the authentic, and how we can measure this in terms of level of compassion involved. These are of course useful theoretical tools to remind ourselves of when we are generally thinking of how to act in politics today. However, they can be seen as quite abstract; the accounts don't give specific details of how exactly to convert the inauthentic to the authentic in our contemporary political situation. It is still valuable to utilise the accounts we explored earlier, especially if we supplement them with specific ways of solving the above issues.

Politics involves people. This is primarily why the break down in relationships within the political sphere is deeply problematic. It sounds all too easy to suggest that instead of treating one another as objects, or pieces on a chess board, we need to recognise one another's agency. It would seem to be a case of 'easier said than done'. This attitude is the beginning of the destructive perspective we have with regards to others and also ourselves. We view the other as someone that is alien to us; we refuse to recognise the fundamental

similarities. This is the view-point that many of us align with. The consequence being that we find it incredibly difficult to relate to others; to sympathise; and therefore we struggle to constructively work with other people. The jump from indifference to caring does seem to be a big one. Having said that, there are ways of narrowing the gap.

Let's start with the relationship between MPs and Voters. Both sides need to demand more from each other. Voters need to demand more honesty from MPs. MPs need to demand more engagement. These demands aren't necessarily achieved by commanding it of the other side, but perhaps by taking action. For example, voters could write to their member of parliament, asking for their opinion on the current political situation with Brexit, they could become involved in debates and discussions whereupon they could question their MP. Vice versa, members of parliament could encourage engagement by presenting in alternative ways. For example: by hosting chats, informal or formal to allow voters to present issues they have; by trying to become a bit more at home with the people they are representing so that they don't appear to be removed from reality. All of these are just relatively small changes that people could make to improve the foundation for beneficial relationships between MPs and voters.

A fact that may help motivate people to start to rebuild relationships with others is that the current political climate is very uncertain. The whole of the UK has been placed in a position of deep doubt. The current state of affairs might actually help unite people together. After all, sometimes it takes a displacement before people are motivated to act. In fact, for Heidegger, we need a feeling of anxiety to truly displace us, before we can begin to be authentic in our Being.<sup>161</sup> As has been mentioned earlier this Heideggerian feeling of anxiety displaces us in more than just the 'I'm feeling uncertain' sense- it individualises.<sup>162</sup> In the same way, it could be argued that the anxiety we're experiencing in the current political climate is also individualising. After all, it is forcing us to consider what is important to us, what our own individual beliefs, goals, and projects are, or should be. Contemporary Heideggerian anxiety does exist then, moreover, it is something we can utilise. Since anxiety draws our attention to what we find important, it would make sense that anxiety can help us work together, especially if individually we recognise the need to improve our political

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<sup>161</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.233 sz.188.

<sup>162</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.232 sz.187.

situation. Our co-anxiety will help us to work alongside one another, and that could mean between voters, between voters and MPs, and even between MPs themselves. In fact, at one point the high level of political co-anxiety caused MPs to take action, to try to find a better way of working together that they hoped would benefit all. For example, the past development in the House of Commons whereupon Members of Parliament decided to take control of the Brexit proceedings by voting on various different options. Although none of them were successful, it is clear that the worry and anxiety of Brexit forced them to consider what they viewed to be important, what they felt would be the best way of dealing with Brexit, and then they recognised that they need to work together by presenting different options. If we can join in solidarity in the face of the anxiety surrounding Brexit, then we may be able to work together in an authentic way. In this sense, we'll be able to re-build the relationships that have become almost non-existent up to this point.

In anxiety we are presented with a choosing.<sup>163</sup> We make a decision about what we find important, and what we want our goals and projects to be. It would seem to me that politics could potentially have a massive effect on many people's projects. Depending on political parties, policies etc. our projects could be hindered or developed. Therefore, it is logical that we take an interest in politics. Even go as far to make politics a project of ours. After all, in *The Fragile We*, Vogel stated: "We coexist authentically and so form an "authentic We" when each feels that he belongs to a common project yet encourages the others to pursue the project in a way that attests to their own individuality."<sup>164</sup> The common project of politics could unite us together.

Conversely, it could be argued that not to get involved in politics would be like getting lost in the they; to have lost sight of our Being. In this way, political apathy, even if it is understandable (as aspects of das Man are) it is not to authentically engage in politics, and by becoming politically apathetic, we are ignoring our responsibility.

The difference between the inauthentic mode of working together and the authentic is that before, in the inauthentic form we were using each other as tools to some kind of end. However, when we authentically interact with others, we are not only recognising our own Being authentically, but also that the other has *their* Being-to-be. I would suggest as

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<sup>163</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.310 sz.266.

<sup>164</sup> Vogel, p.79.

well that there is a mutual feeling of sympathy. Both parties in the interaction can understand what the other is going through, and can offer feelings of sympathy. This shared feeling helps promote a positive and productive collaboration, thus transforming the feeling of indifference to one of sympathy and compassion.

If anything, the ongoing Brexit talks have instilled in us the fact that the future of the relationship between the EU and the UK is fractious. Perhaps that fact can help us see that since we are burning bridges between ourselves and other countries, that the time for indifference, or even squabbling between ourselves, is over. We must try to salvage whatever relationships we can in order to work together in this uncertain, and frankly, dire situation.

The over-arching claim here isn't that changing our ways of interacting with ourselves and with others from the inauthentic to the authentic is remarkably easy - this is certainly not what I'm claiming. Rather that the tools that we can utilise in promoting feelings of sympathy and compassion for others are already there in front of us. It just requires the individual to take a step back from their situation to recognise that the current political dilemma requires that we work with others. Not only that but our very Being requires that we are Being-with. By authentically recognising our own Being we are able to move forward, as authentic Mitsein to critically re-engage with politics. In this way, Heidegger can help provide a fresh approach to viewing ourselves and one another, especially within the context of politics.

### How to Behave Authentically

In my eyes then, a Heideggerian solution to issues within politics begins with authenticity, and authentic Mitsein. The term authenticity not only includes other people, but can also specific ways of acting. This is an area I'm going to explore now.

### Authentically Discussing Politics

Earlier, one of the issues that was quite striking within politics was that of inauthentic discussion. Democracy really relies on input from all sides, and ideally an input which is informed. The important concept Heidegger provides us with here is reticence. This is something I have mentioned earlier but will frame in the context of politics now. A

discussion about politics that could be deemed authentic would involve reticence. Everyone involved in the discussion would be quite deliberate with what they were saying, what would be discussed would be thought-through and would be considered before even being said. An authentic discussion on the current Brexit situation would involve people who have tried to keep as informed as possible; have deliberated over the issues involved; and then wish to engage with others who are in a similar position to them (an informed one). This discussion wouldn't necessarily involve everyone agreeing on all the topics examined, in fact it may even be preferable to have controversial opinions, as it gives everyone involved an insight into a different perspective, which may or may not impact upon their own opinion on Brexit. The people involved wouldn't just be swayed by what one person is saying; they wouldn't automatically agree with someone because of who they are, but because of the substance of what they said. In this scenario, genuine Heideggerian understanding would be in play. This is because the actors involved wouldn't be fascinated with the conversation on Brexit, as they would be if they were involved in a *das Man*-like conversation. Furthermore, by discussing political topics, we can in turn delve into what it is to be in the world, what it is to struggle with our own Being, and also what interests us. With this understanding of what is said, the people involved are able to leave the conversation with more of an understanding of a) the perspectives on Brexit and b) themselves and society. It is in this way that the authentic discussion on Brexit would instil in the actors a sense of belonging and dwelling in the world.

#### Authentically Combatting Misinformation

As has been touched upon previously, we need to be more informed before we announce our perspective on a topic to others. This isn't just for our own benefit but for other people. A lot of people including politicians and celebrities project their case for or against something without really understanding the matter. It's either a knee-jerk reaction, or something they haven't delved into enough. More thought needs to go into what they are putting out there for the world to see. This is primarily because many people will read a post, a tweet, or an article by someone and believe it entirely, and absorb it as their own opinion. This is something that needs to become scarce, and this can be achieved by going to the source of this misinformation, and encouraging everyone to really think about what

they're putting out into the world. This especially goes for people who wield quite a lot of power with a pen, or in 280 characters.

Another way to combat political misinformation is to embolden people to go out and investigate; to look into claims about what the outlook might be if we leave the European Union – for example. This would involve a lot of questioning: of the claims, but also of the self; of our own Being. This questioning of our Being would come into play, because while questioning claims surrounding politics, we would naturally question whether it is important to us, whether I believe something to be true, whether contrasting opinions make it false. All of these questions would lead me to gain some insight into my own Being, and part of what it means to be Being-in-the-world – to be engaged in it.

### Authentically Engaging with Social Media

In recent years there has been a definite ontological shift, and that shift has been instigated by social media. For our purposes I will be exploring the potential Heideggerian solutions for social media with regards to the political climate. If we're being completely honest a true Heideggerian response would be to cut ourselves off from social media entirely, after all he already had deep suspicions about telephones. However, this doesn't seem like particularly helpful advice, very few people would agree to that. So, the task at hand is how to frame the alternative to the current inauthentic way of engaging with social media.

I suppose the key here with this kind of authenticity is authentic Being-with. Something that we commonly do within the realm of social media is to try to fit in, to conform to the masses. That may be with the pictures that we post, or even the comments we make. We put these things out into the world in order to get a reaction from others, and usually the one reaction we desire is that of a 'like', because we want others to accept us. This way of interacting with social media is very Das Man in nature due to the fact that we are getting lost in the social structure of the 'they'. A political example might be that for many university students it's quite a 'trendy' thing to have an opinion when it comes to politics; to get involved in a political party; to take a stand on something political; or at least to document doing so on social media. Of course, some people will indeed have strong feelings about politics, and will be very engaged. Unfortunately, it could also be the case



that the vast majority of people are merely play acting at being politically engaged. All they really want is for people to think that they are passionate about politics, so they give the illusion that they are, and that is all that social media demands.

We need to get back to basics then within our Being, we need to recognise our own Being-to-be, and that of others. This involves recognising that the opinions of others, especially as portrayed on social media, do not really make a difference. The attention that we want from others is actually superficial, and ultimately will not aid us in our conflicted Being. In this way we wouldn't allow ourselves to get swept up in the herd of social media. We wouldn't be relying on 'likes' in order to validate ourselves, or promote things, such as a certain political view, without knowing anything about them, just to appear 'on trend'. We can of course still interact with others on social media; post things on social media etc. but the knowledge of our own Being can keep us grounded and authentic when doing so.

Keeping informed of the potential confirmation bias involved in social media already means that we are one step ahead. If we bear in mind that this could lull us into an information bubble then we will be able to off-set it, by keeping ourselves open to the other perspectives out there. So if we find ourselves in a situation where our own political opinions seem to be reflected on social media, then why don't we explore other angles. In this way we can balance out our own, sometimes self-inflicted, confirmation bias.

In the section above I have outlined some of the problems I see within contemporary British politics, namely: a break down in relationships; the way we interact with social media; misinformation, and apathy. I have framed these problems in terms of self-estrangement, the 'they', and indifference. I have then suggested ways in which we can try to combat these problems. All of these solutions lean on the Heideggerian framework of authentic Dasein. In this way, I have presented various techniques in which we may authentically combat the problems in contemporary British politics.

Where do we stand now?

Throughout, I've been assuming that people, in general, are looking to have a positive interaction with politics, that they are seeking out solutions to problems within politics. I've suggested that being authentic is key to that interaction. However, call me a pessimist, but there are many people within politics that could be viewed as acting in a

negative way, however for them it is a positive; they have no issues with acting negatively; in fact it could be argued that it serves their purposes better that way.

Perhaps then it would be worthwhile to look into a way of sifting through those that are acting in good faith, and those that are acting out of bad faith. With bad faith here being those that are acting only in their own interest, to further only their own project. A diagnostic tool for those who are wishing to have a positive interaction with politics would be useful. In the next section I am going to suggest that recognition is the key to this diagnostic tool.

### Heideggerian Recognition

In this section I intend to suggest a Heideggerian account of recognition. I will be utilising Lauren Freeman's paper "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's *Being and Time* S.26".<sup>165</sup> In this paper Freeman explores S. 26 of BT, she suggests how this section can give us an account of recognition.<sup>166</sup> Freeman's paper will be the jumping off point for producing a diagnostic tool in which to distinguish between those that are politically in good or bad faith.

In Section 26 there is an account of Being-with that encompasses the authentic, this is an account that focusses on solicitude. When discussing Vogel's cosmopolitan account we came across the concepts involved in solicitude: leaping-ahead, leaping-in, and indifference. Freeman argues that these are also examples of kinds of recognition; that for leaping-in/ahead or indifference to occur there is an implicit recognition at play.

### Recognition qua Leaping-ahead

Leaping-ahead could be viewed as the positive way of recognising others. In leaping-ahead we recognise the other as not only someone who has their Being-to-be, but also as someone who is an 'other'; a self-determining agent, as we all are. Meaning that they deserve recognition and the choice to choose who they are, without other people getting in

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<sup>165</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's *Being and Time* S.26" p.1.

<sup>166</sup> Freeman aligns with Axel Honneth's definition of recognition.

their way.<sup>167</sup> There is a further level of recognition, which is that this other person is capable of choosing, meaning she doesn't need others to jump in for her- to act as a 'hero'. In this sense of recognition, we are recognising people in an appropriate manner which doesn't paralyse ourselves or the other in a struggle for recognition. Not only that, but in leaping-ahead we are also recognising our own fundamental Being: our care, Dasein as Being-with etc.<sup>168</sup> In this sense, in leaping-ahead we aren't just acknowledging that the other is a person, we are recognising something much more fundamental in the other and also ourselves, then we are acting on this recognition by leaping-ahead. Freeman suggests that: "When someone is recognised as capable of carrying out her own task or fulfilling her own role, her relation to the other in fact determines the possibility of both her and the other's freedom and selfhood."<sup>169</sup>

Within Section 26 it could be argued that Heidegger presents us with an example of authentic Mitsein and positive recognition, within leaping-ahead. Heidegger suggests that "...when they devote themselves to the same affair in common, their doing so is determined by the manner in which their Dasein each in its own way, has been taken hold of. They thus become authentically bound together, and this makes possible the right kind of objectivity which frees the Other in his freedom for himself."<sup>170</sup> Something that initially sticks out in this passage is the idea that there is the potential for being 'authentically bound together'. This 'binding' might be worth exploring. When we consider the word 'bound' it can stir up varying connotations: positive and negative. If we start with the latter: being bound could mean being tied to something whether physically, in which case being limited in action; or being bound to a promise, which hints at being limited in discussing certain topics. Being bound then can be limiting. On the other hand, being bound could mean something positive. It could be another way of stating that we are deeply connected with another person, that there is some reliance on the other in the relationship, and that isn't necessarily a bad thing. It might be useful to refer to the German word here, in order to gauge which version Heidegger would align himself with here. When we delve deeper into

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<sup>167</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S.26" p.88.

<sup>168</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S.26" p.92.

<sup>169</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S.26" p.88.

<sup>170</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.159 sz.122.

the word 'Verbundenheit' we can suggest that being bound to the other shouldn't be taken in a negative context, as it can be directly translated as 'connectedness', 'solidarity', and 'closeness'. All three of these words hint towards a positive togetherness, rather than a sense of being trapped. This 'authentic binding' then seems to be something that is harmonious, and would seem to aid both Dasein involved as it allows them both to be authentic in their Being. All of this matters because it adds weight to the theory that Heidegger has presented, not only a positive way of interacting with other people, but also a positive account of recognition. It could even be suggested that this 'bond', 'connectedness' arises out of positive recognition. From this, it could be argued that Heidegger is stating that when we are able to recognise people for what they truly are, and implicitly recognise our own Being authentically, we are able to work better together.

This way of working together can be observed within politics, such as when people work together to campaign in support of a potential MP that they believe would impress the right sort of change in parliament. This kind of working together is for a common goal, it is a kind of devoting themselves to the same affair in common. In their collective project of campaigning they thus become authentically bound together in a sort of leaping-ahead of the other. Not only is this a form of authentic Mitsein, but also an account of positive recognition. The people involved in the collective project are able to recognise the other, without reifying each other. They recognise the other as someone who is entering into the same project as them, so to a certain extent the other believes and supports similar things to them. Neither person is wanting to leap-in for the other as they recognise that the other deserves their choice to choose, and that their collective project will progress more successfully if they refrain from interfering with the other's freedom. Authentic recognition from both parties involved can lead to positive social interactions.

#### Recognition qua Leaping-in

The other fundamental example of solicitude that Heidegger describes in S. 26 is leaping-in. In this mode Dasein is fundamentally failing to understand; to recognise the other as a Dasein. The Dasein that leaps in for the other "fails to recognise: that the other Dasein is fellow human being; that she has projects (and selfhood) of her own; and that she

is capable of carrying out her projects and of becoming a self.”<sup>171</sup> All of which is an act of reifying the other. In fact, Freeman coins this mode of solicitude “ontological reification”.<sup>172</sup> In leaping-in the other’s care is taken away from it. Perhaps rather than taking it literally that the other’s care is taken away completely, we should actually be viewing it in terms of recognition: Dasein has failed to recognise the Other’s Being aptly, so in that sense correct recognition of the other’s care is lacking, rather than their fundamental ontological structure of care.

Towards the end of Section 26 Heidegger suggests ‘The Being-with-one-another of those who are hired for the same affair often thrives only on mistrust.’<sup>173</sup> Now this is something that isn’t elaborated on much. However, we can see the direct parallel here between what Heidegger is suggesting and the issues that are occurring between politicians. We have already discussed mistrust between the public and politicians but perhaps mistrust can also occur between politicians. Many politicians who are supposedly working towards the same goal; fixing the same issue in society, don’t seem to trust one another. Now that there is growing pressure on parliament to work together to fix the issue of the departure from the EU, issues surrounding mistrust are emerging. The vote of confidence against Theresa May helps justify the claim that there is just as much mistrust between politicians as there is between the public and politicians.

This mistrust could be framed in terms of recognition. Both sides are wishing to be deemed the people who can ‘solve’ the Brexit dilemma. Thus they wish to frame the other as being inept, which is actually not that difficult to pull off given the way Brexit is going. If both sides are framing the other as unsuccessful in some way with regards to Brexit, then naturally both sides will begin to distrust one another. This inauthentic recognition is in fact a failure to recognise the other as Dasein. By framing the other politician in thing-like terms, as a kind of Kantian means-to-an-end, each person is reifying the other. The inability to aptly recognise the other doesn’t just limit the other’s Being, it also limits the one who is acting inauthentically as by failing to correctly recognise the other as Dasein, they are failing to recognise a fundamental part of their own Being - Being-with.

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<sup>171</sup> Lauren Freeman, “Love is Not Blind: In/visibility and Recognition in M. Heidegger’s Thinking” in *In/visibility: Perspectives on Inclusion and Exclusion*, ed. L. Freeman, Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows’ Conferences, 26 (2009).

<sup>172</sup> L. Freeman, “Love is Not Blind”.

<sup>173</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.159 sz.122.

## Recognition qua Indifference

Perhaps the most destructive form of recognition that can be drawn from S. 26 is the kind involved in 'indifference'. Indifference could be described as the deficient mode of solicitude: "being-for, -against, or -without one another; passing the other by; not "mattering" to one another."<sup>174</sup> When people seem indifferent to others, it is indicative of a refusal to acknowledge and recognise the other, an ignoring of the other.<sup>175</sup> Indifference towards others tends to involve a passiveness for the other person; a sense of not caring for the other. In fact it is difficult to distinguish whether indifference refers to a refusal to recognise the other, or a misrecognition of not seeing the other as a fellow Dasein, and in turn not recognising our own Being. Whichever way it is viewed, this attitude is destructive. An example of indifference could be when a politician doesn't recognise his or her constituents as having their Being-to-be, as having needs and requirements that they can help with from their position of power.

Where do we stand now?

Not only does this suppressed account of recognition give us a further ethical dimension to Heidegger's *BT*, but it can be utilised when discussing how to engage authentically with politics. Specifically, the suppressed account of recognition could be useful when deliberating over those who are acting positively within politics and those that are not. In this way it can be used as a diagnostic, and a critical, tool. We can read about politicians in the press, read about their encounters with others, and then using the suppressed account we can identify which type of recognition she or he generally adheres to, and then go on to decide whether or not they are acting in good faith, or not. This account of recognition equips us with a way of evaluating our interactions with others. For example, if Emma has a discussion with someone about politics and they seem to be making claims that they don't have much evidence for, yet they are pushing the ideas on Emma, in a sense they seem to be leaping-in for Emma; the person isn't letting her think for herself; they are not recognising her being-to-be. The recognition involved is thus inauthentic. Emma can

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<sup>174</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S.26" p.91.

<sup>175</sup> L. Freeman, "Recognition Reconsidered: A re-reading of Heidegger's Being and Time S.26" p.89.

later think on this interaction and decide whether she wants to enter into this kind of encounter again, or how she could act differently in order to combat the inauthentic actions of the other person involved in the discussion. It is in this way that the suppressed account of recognition can give us a way of evaluating interactions, and thus can help us in these interactions, in the sphere of politics and out of it.

## Conclusion

For many, politics has become this ineffable entity; something that one occasionally dips into when necessary, but not something to be understood in its entirety. However, once we reduce politics to what it truly is about: people; then it has the chance of becoming something many of us might feel we can engage with. In order to understand people; namely the interactions between them, we had to first delve into our own Being. Heidegger's *BT* aided us here. By getting to grips with Dasein, its authentic and inauthentic modes, we were able to lay the groundwork for an approach to politics. With the help of Marx and Vogel a form of authentic Mitsein was reconstructed from Heidegger's *BT*. An examination of Lauren Freeman's paper provided us with an accessible Heideggerian account of recognition. All of which enabled us to construct a kind of Heideggerian ethics that had authentic Mitsein at its heart. With that we were able to demonstrate that *BT* does have the framework to support positive interactions with other people, and therefore can provide the foundations for the way we view people, and also the way we *ought* to be viewing them. I believe that we have gained a useful, and interesting perspective due to our phenomenological approach to contemporary politics.

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